REPORT RESUMES

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FARM WORKERS IN A SPECIALIZED SEASONAL CROP AREA, STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

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SPECIALIZATION IN THE CROPS BEST ADAPTED TO THE LOCAL AREA IS SEEN AS A HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE SYSTEM OF AGRICULTURE, BUT BY CREATING THE NEED FOR LARGE NUMBERS OF WORKERS FOR SHORT PERIODS OF TIME, IT CAUSES UNEMPLOYMENT AND MIGRATION. A SURVEY OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLE WORKERS IN STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA IN 1962-63 REVEALS--(1) THEIR EARNINGS ARE ABOUT ONE-THIRD THE WAGES OF THOSE IN NONFARM EMPLOYMENT, (2) A MAJORITY HAVE NO FIRM ATTACHMENT TO SEASONAL FARM WORK, AND (3) THERE IS A SHARP DIVISION OF LABOR FORCES, IN WHICH THE ANGLO AND SPANISH-AMERICAN PERFORMED FRUIT OPERATIONS AND IMPORTED WORKERS PICKED TOMATOES AND MELONS. TWO CONSIDERATIONS ARE PRESENTED TOWARD DEVELOPING A STABLE LABOR FORCE--(1) INCREASED YEAR AROUND EMPLOYMENT IS NEEDED, AND (2) A LOCAL SEASONAL LABOR FORCE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED TO TAKE CARE OF PEAK SEASONAL NEEDS. THREE GROUPS OF MIGRANTS ARE IDENTIFIED AND POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION PRESENTED TO STABILIZE THE LABOR FORCE. INFORMATION PRESENTED ABOUT MIGRANTS INCLUDES TABLES SHOWING EARNINGS, EXPERIENCE, HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS, MIGRANCY PATTERNS, TYPES OF WORK PERFORMED, AGE AND EDUCATION, AND DAYS. (SF)

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DIVISION OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
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Farm Workers in a Specialized Seasonal Crop Area

Stanislaus County, California

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CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
GIANNINI FOUNDATION OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
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FARM WORKERS IN A SPECIALIZED SEASONAL CROP AREA, STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

by

William H. Metzler[1]

INTRODUCTION

California soil and climatic conditions are favorable to the production of a wide diversity of crops. Yet its farm operators specialize in the crops which they can produce to the best advantage in their area. This offers the advantage of high production at minimal cost and enables them to compete in local, eastern, and other markets. Many crops are highly seasonal in their work requirements, and local specialization in such a crop pyramids the labor needs during the harvest or other periods of intensive labor demand. Comparatively little labor may be needed in the area during the rest of the year. On the other hand, the need for workers for sustenance continues through the year, and despite migration between crop areas, they find it difficult to maintain themselves. This variance between labor demands and workers' needs is more pronounced in some areas than in others, but after a century it still "constitutes the most difficult agricultural labor problem in the State."[2]

Usually the major disadvantage of this system has been to the seasonal workers -- underemployment and privation. In years of relatively full employment, however, the adverse effects fall more heavily on the growers. Irregular jobs attract few workers in a tight labor market. Consequently, as we overcome unemployment and depression, the position of seasonal employers in the labor market will become increasingly precarious.

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[1] Agricultural Economist, Retired, Farm Production Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Research Associate in the Experiment Station, University of California.

[2] Agricultural Labor in the San Joaquin Valley. Governor's Committee to Survey the Agricultural Labor Resources of the San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento, 1951, p. 48.

More than 200 different fruit, vegetable, and field crops are produced commercially in California. The extent to which their production is localized varies widely from crop to crop. The productive area for the most sensitive crops such as dates, avocados, cherries, apples, apricots, and lemons is strictly limited. At the other extreme, such crops as grapes, tomatoes, and walnuts can be produced profitably over a wide area. While production now is highly concentrated in the areas with the most favorable growing conditions, some shifting can still be expected as new varieties are developed which will have different soil, temperature, or moisture requirements; as changes occur in consumer demand; or as new areas are developed which have a competitive advantage. The growth of cities is cutting into established fruit and vegetable areas and this is bringing on changes to other areas adapted to the production of the displaced crops.1/

The specialization of a local area in the production of specific crops, then, cannot be regarded as an accidental matter which can be changed readily to other crops or crop combinations. A change to a program of crop diversification is also hazardous because it is likely to involve crops which are produced at an economic disadvantage as compared with other localities.

Seasonality of Labor Demand

Each crop has a different production pattern which leaves its impress on the institutions of the producing locality. Those crops which can be handled mechanically such as hay or grain, are often taken care of by the operator or a member of his family. Then the producing community is made up of farm operators and their families plus a small number of general farm workers who often are housed on the farms. It is specialization in crops which have highly variable labor requirements during the year, such as most fruits and vegetables, that brings on problems of labor recruitment, housing, irregular employment, and migration. The month-to-month requirements for all labor and for temporary or seasonal labor are shown for selected crops in Table 1.

1/ Specialization patterns in California agriculture are discussed by Farrell, Kenneth R., Geographic Changes in California Agriculture, Berkeley: University of California, Agr. Ext. Serv., 1951; and by McCorkle, C.O., Jr., Adjustment Problems Faced by Commercial Farms on the West Coast, Davis: University of California, 1957.

TABLE 1

Man-hours of Labor Required Per Acre by Month for Selected Crops, California, 1962[a/]

Month	All labor required per acre for					Temporary labor required per acre for				
	Peaches	Apricots	Grapes	Tomatoes	Straw-berries	Peaches	Apricots	Grapes	Tomatoes	Straw-berries
	man-hours					man-hours				
Jan.	20	9	11	0	38	15	0	7	0	35
Feb.	15	1	16	2	3	10	0	13	0	0
Mar.	0	2	5	1	85	0	0	2	0	80
Apr.	2	36	3	12	125	0	25	0	12	117
May	93	43	3	14	365	80	30	0	13	349
June	2	5	3	14	71	0	0	0	13	56
July	20	112	3	7	70	16	80	0	7	62
Aug.	71	3	3	42	6	60	0	0	40	0
Sept.	26	15	92	46	3	20	7	91	44	0
Oct.	0	21	3	26	3	0	16	0	24	0
Nov.	5	21	3	2	0	0	16	0	0	0
Dec.	21	24	3	0	0	15	16	0	0	0

[a/] Data from Seasonal Labor in California Agriculture, Division of Agricultural Sciences, University of California, Berkeley, 1962. Data on peaches from Stanislaus County, apricots from Alameda County, grapes from Madera County, tomatoes from Yolo County, and strawberries from San Joaquin County, all in the deciduous fruit area of California.

These are typical crops in the deciduous fruit area of California. None of them provides employment of such a nature that a worker could afford to rely on it for a livelihood. Up to now, however, the large supply of labor has made it necessary for some workers to accept temporary employment.[1/] Seasonal employment, migration of single workers or of families, and seasonal dependence on welfare, have become an established part of seasonal agriculture. Polyglot populations have been attracted to the areas of irregular work opportunities and have contributed to the community at their level of economic ability and cultural development.[2/] They have set up economic and social worlds in their camps which are separate from those of the more affluent community. Problems of multilevel social structures and racial and cultural mixing result.[3/]

At the present time, a strong effort is being made to obtain full employment. Any change in this direction will reduce the supply of labor available to shift from one seasonal job to another. Growers will need to adjust their operations to the reduced number of available workers. Mechanization has provided the means for adjustment in some crops. Growers of other crops may have to look to other methods of holding a labor supply. They may need to check over what they have to offer in the labor market and develop a job structure which will attract and hold a labor force.

Since seasonality of labor demand is becoming a difficult problem for growers as well as for workers, the present report has a two-sided aspect. On one hand, it deals with the untenable economic position of seasonal farm workers in the deciduous fruit area of California. On the other, it advances suggestions for the development of an employment structure which would retain a seasonal labor supply in that area.

[1/] Fisher, Lloyd H., The Harvest Labor Market in California, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953, analyzes harvest labor problems in this State.

[2/] Migratory Labor Hearings, Subcommittee on Migratory Labor, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate, 86th Congress, 2nd Ses., Pt. 2, Washington, 1960, pp. 1465-1477.

[3/] Testimony of Margaret Bullard in Transcript of Public Hearing, Committee to Survey Agricultural Labor Resources of the San Joaquin Valley, Bakersfield, 1950. Also, California's Farm Labor Problems, Pt. II, Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, 1963.

Although this report deals only with specialization, seasonality, and the employment structure in one area, its purpose is to engender general consideration of labor use in this system of agriculture. To reconcile seasonal agriculture and the economic requirements of its work force would constitute a major step ahead in technological development.

TRENDS IN FARM SPECIALIZATION AND EMPLOYMENT, CALIFORNIA AND STANISLAUS COUNTY

Wheat was the first major specialty crop in California, and its highly seasonal pattern of employment created problems of idleness and relief.[1] As irrigation systems were developed, they permitted the intensive production of fruit and vegetable crops. Workers moved out of the cities annually to the irrigated areas to assist in the harvest. These tended to be "floaters" rather than to follow a regular pattern of movement.[2]

Family Migration

During the late 1920's, a significant change began to take place in the farm labor force in California. Migrating Spanish-American families began to move between the fruit harvests. During the early thirties, they were supplanted by Anglo-American families who moved in from the drought areas of the Southwest and Middlewest. These families were practically penniless and immediately created problems of housing, medical care, and unemployment. They settled in local "shacktowns" instead of leaving the agricultural areas when the work season was over. Their seasonal unemployment led to relief problems which could not be handled by voluntary agencies. The State Relief Administration was established to provide assistance for the unemployed and in 1935 conducted a survey of the agricultural labor requirements in the State.[3] This provided a picture of the seasonality of labor use at that time. In the State as a whole, 46,448 farm workers were needed in January; 79,982 in April; 140,461 in July; and 198,340 in September.

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[1] Transactions, California State Agricultural Society, Sacramento, 1868-69; also California Agriculture, edited by C.B. Hutchison, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946, contains an excellent brief history of agriculture in the State.

[2] Parker, Carleton H., The Casual Laborer and Other Essays, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1920; Armstrong, James H., Survey of the Economic Resources of Stanislaus County, Modesto, 1926; and Ray, H.C., Stanislaus County 1854-1954, Modesto, 1954.

[3] Survey of Agricultural Labor Requirements in California, 1935, State Relief Administration, 1935.

The corresponding figures for Stanislaus County pointed to a peak need for 8,800 workers in August of which 4,000 would have work for less than two months, and only 800 would have work for longer than five months. Few workers would have employment for longer than eight months. Migration to other crop areas was essential to support a family, but during the winter months little farm work was available. Seasonal work and seasonal movement had to be supplemented by seasonal relief.

Recommendations that the growers alter the production structure so as to provide more regular employment began to be considered during the late 1930's. County committees were established to discuss programs of diversification. Yet the results were small. Some individual growers diversified their operations but there was almost no replanning on a community basis.1/

The seasonal workers gradually established patterns of movement between the areas of high labor demand. Those who had settled in Stanislaus County went south when the peach season was over and worked in the cotton harvest.2/ Those who lived in the cotton areas moved north into Stanislaus and other fruit counties during the period between cotton chopping and cotton picking. The workers migrated on into Oregon and Washington if the fruit crops in California were light.

Seasonal workers were attracted to the towns in which canneries, packingsheds, and other processing plants were located. These plants provided jobs for the women while the men were working in the orchards. For the men, they provided somewhat more regular work and the first step out of farm employment. The Stanislaus area became a major center for this type of migration.

On the other hand, the seasonal workers did not engage in every type of farm work with equal interest. Producers of vegetables were sometimes short of labor despite a surplus of fruit and cotton workers. The vegetable growers entered into contracts with Spanish-American labor contractors to furnish them

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1/ Agricultural Labor in the San Joaquin Valley, Governor's Committee to Survey the Agricultural Labor Resources of the San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento, 1951, provides a brief account of the experiment on the El Solyo Ranch in Stanislaus County, p. 134. Some planning was done on a county basis in Tulare County.

2/ Metzler, William H., The Agricultural Labor Force in the San Joaquin Valley, California, 1948, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., 1950.

with workers. The workers brought in were largely single, young Spanish-Americans from southern California, Texas, and Arizona.[1] In this way, an essentially different labor market and labor force were developed for vegetable areas in the State.

Changes in Seasonal Farm Labor Force

Although these patterns of seasonal employment and unemployment are still characteristic of California agriculture, profound changes have occurred during the last two decades. These have changed both the farm workers and the farm labor situation in the State.

The first of these stemmed from employment in defense activities during World War II and the Korean War. These wars drew the surplus workers from agriculture and provided them with an orientation in nonfarm employment, earnings, and ways of life.[2]

The second major set of changes stemmed from mechanization of the cotton harvest. Cotton picking had been the most reliable source of employment for the workers who migrated between crops in the San Joaquin Valley. Without it many of them had little chance to remain in seasonal farm work. Mechanization of this harvest necessitated a search for other employment.[3] Likewise, mechanization of the sugar beet harvest reduced the work year for stoop laborers and stimulated their movement to other lines of work.

The third set of changes came as a result of the importation of workers from Mexico to meet shortages of domestic farm labor. This started during World War II but had its greatest impact on the farm labor market after the wartime shortages were over.[4] In Stanislaus County, the importees became the major

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1/ Schwartz, Harry, Seasonal Farm Labor in the United States, New York: Columbia University Press, 1945. California's Farm Labor Problems, Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, 1961.

2/ California's Farm Labor Problems, Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, 1961.

3/ Metzler, William H., The Farm Worker in a Changing Agriculture, Berkeley: University of California Agr. Expt. Sta. Giannini Foundation Res. Rept. No. 277, 1964; and Curley, R.G., and Eric Thor, Migrant Labor and Mechanization, Colorado: Fort Collins, paper presented at meeting of American Society of Agricultural Engineers (dittoed), 1964.

4/ Mexican Farm Labor Program, Hearings Subcommittee on Equipment, Supplies, and Manpower, of Committee on Agriculture, House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 1st Ses., March 1963, Washington, Serial D.

labor force for work in tomatoes, melons, and other vegetable crops. The most important result was not the resentment expressed by underemployed domestic workers. They protested, but showed no strong desire to do the work being performed by the Mexicans. A more important change was that the growers had begun to expect the government to meet their highly seasonal labor needs. Acting on this prospect, the fruit growers planted new acreages of peaches and apricots which would increase the peak demands for seasonal labor in the future.

The fourth change is relatively recent -- industrial and commercial expansion in the large cities of the State which offer an outlet for ambitious farm workers. When the survey was made in 1962-63, on which the present report is based, it was found that in over 150 blocks of houses which had once been built by farm workers around Modesto, only one-tenth were now occupied by anyone connected with agriculture. Furthermore, in earlier years, the peach harvest period was one of great overcrowding -- in the worker residential areas, in the camps, and even on the canal and creek banks. During the 1962-63 survey, little evidence of overcrowding was found.1/

The period since 1940, then, has been one of a depleted labor supply, both of resident workers and of those who move in for the peach harvest.2/ The surplus of migrants from the Dust Bowl area is no longer available. They and other farm workers are moving to the larger industrial areas which provide a greater range of economic opportunity, and it is doubtful that farm employers can attract them back to seasonal farm work. On the other hand, some farm operators in the county do not want a large resident labor force.3/ They hope instead for a labor supply which will move in when needed and leave when the harvest is over. Workers who would try to remain in the county probably would add to the seasonal welfare burden. In the light of the changing labor situation in the State, special programs of labor recruitment, management, and retention will be essential.4/

1/ See testimony of Dr. Paul O'Rourke in Hearings, Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, Feb. 19-20, 1964.

2/ Hearings, Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, Nov. 16-17, 1959, pp. 166-171.

3/ Ibid., pp. 161-181.

4/ Mamer, John W., and Varden Fuller, Labor and the Economic Factors in Fruit and Vegetable Harvest Mechanization; paper presented at meeting of American Institute of Biological Sciences, Boulder: University of Colorado, 1964.

SPECIALIZED AGRICULTURE AND LABOR DEMANDS IN STANISLAUS COUNTY

Although the agricultural enterprises in Stanislaus County are highly specialized, they are also very diverse in nature, and only a part are devoted to crops with high variations in seasonal labor demand (Table 2). According to the 1959 Census of Agriculture, there were 6,033 farms in the county, of which 4,216 were classified as commercial.[1] Only 3,471, or 57.5 percent, used any hired labor during the previous year. Of the commercial farms, over half used regular rather than seasonal labor.[2] These included 1,259 dairy farms, 394 poultry farms, 401 livestock farms, and 283 general farms. On the other hand, 1,827 farms, or 43.4 percent, could be expected to have highly variable labor needs. These included 1,536 fruit and nut farms, 73 vegetable farms, and a high proportion of the 218 field crop farms.

Recent figures compiled from disability insurance payment records provide a basis for rough estimation of the seasonal change in number of workers in these two groups of enterprises:[3]

	Low month	High month
Fruit, vegetable, field crops	2,105 (Apr.)	10,842 (Aug.)
Livestock, dairy, general farms	2,355 (Feb.)	3,560 (Aug.)

State Employment Service estimates based on labor requirements for the major seasonal activities show an even wider spread (Figure 1).

Labor Use in Fruit and Vegetable Crops

Total labor requirements for the year vary widely from crop to crop in the county. Labor requirements per acre for the major fruit and vegetable crops have been estimated as follows:

Crop	Man-hours per acre [4]		Man-hours per acre [4]
Peaches - cling	271	Almonds	69
Grapes - raisin	141	Walnuts	55
Tomatoes - cannery	167	Melons	167
Apricots	289	Strawberries	768

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[1] United States Census of Agriculture, 1959, Vol. I, Pt. 48, California.

[2] The Census classifies workers who were employed on the same farm for 150 days or more during the previous year as regular.

[3] California Employment and Payrolls in Agricultural Labor, quarterly reports for 1963, California Department of Employment, Sacramento.

[4] Data from Seasonal Labor in California Agriculture, Berkeley: University of California, Division of Agricultural Sciences, 1962. Some data are for Stanislaus County, others are for neighboring counties with similar production conditions.

TABLE 2

Major Agricultural Products, Stanislaus County, 1963[a]

Crop	Acreage	Production	Value
	acres	tons	dollars
Fruit & nut crops			35,851,000
Peaches	22,598	277,000	18,352,000
Grapes	18,434	147,530	5,390,000
Apricots	3,932	39,700	3,317,000
Berries, all	1,138	5,450	1,499,100
Almonds	7,667	6,820	3,478,000
Walnuts	13,702	9,860	4,338,000
Vegetable crops			12,656,820
Tomatoes	8,730	147,000	5,320,000
Melons, all	5,662	48,547	2,775,000
Green lima beans	4,470	6,720	961,000
Peppers	1,240	18,100	876,000
Field crops			28,428,520
Hay and grain	146,900	772,775	16,054,000
Beans	34,700	31,600	5,683,000
Sugar beets	4,250	91,800	1,102,000
Livestock & poultry			33,474,500
Cattle	---	---	14,844,000
Chickens	---	---	8,626,000
Turkeys	---	---	9,156,000
Livestock products			45,873,600
Milk	---	---	28,267,000
Eggs	---	---	17,533,000
All agricultural products	---	---	158,790,000

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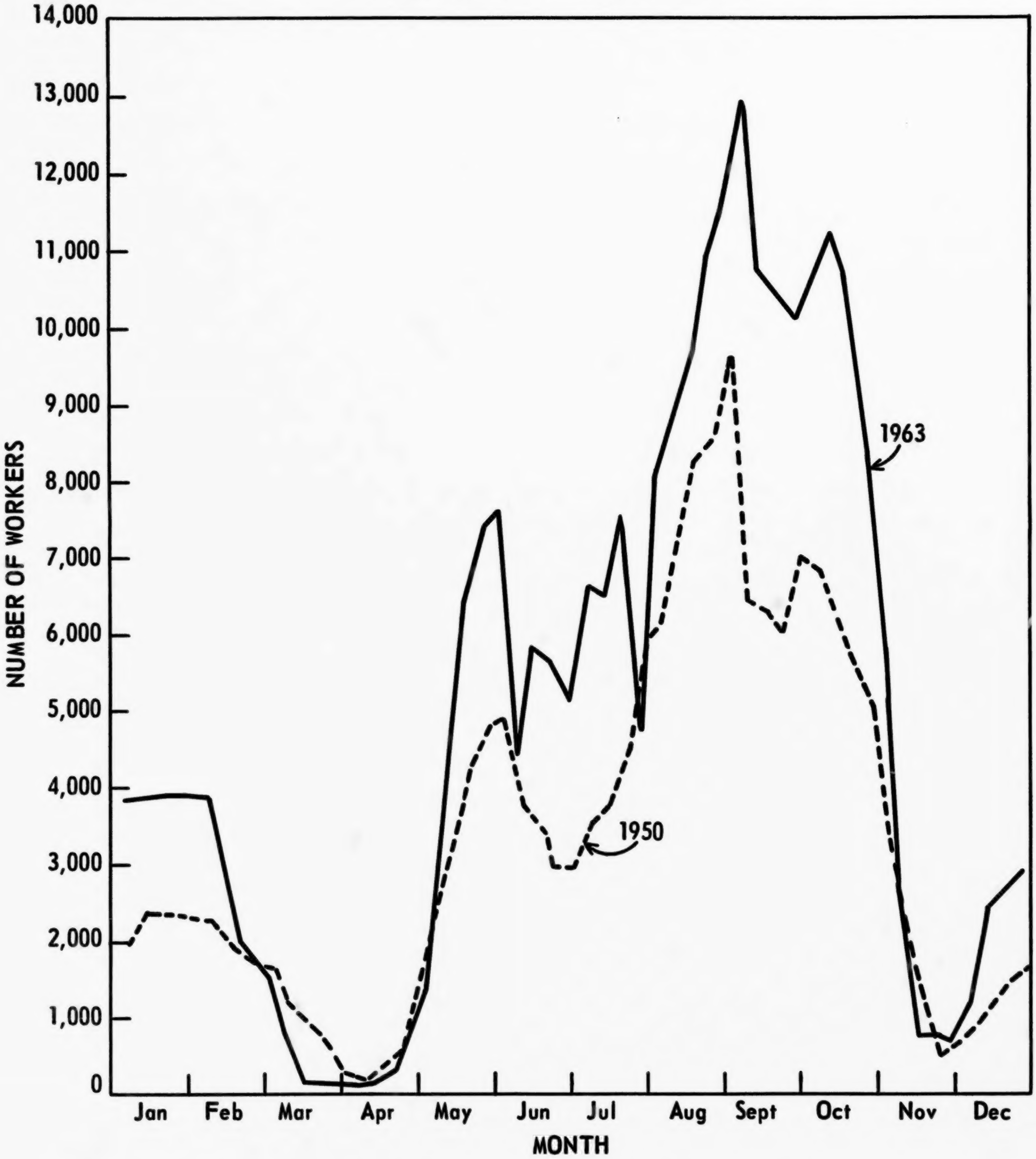
[a] Data from 1963 Agricultural Crop Report, Department of Agriculture, Modesto, California.

FIGURE 1

Labor Used in Major Agricultural Activities, Stanislaus County – 1950 and 1963.



Data from May 1963 Revised Estimates – California State Employment Service.

The seasonal pattern of labor use varies from crop to crop in the county. In peach production, around 2,400 workers are needed for pruning during the winter months, 4,000 for thinning in May and June, and from 7,500 to 8,600 for the six-week harvest period in August and September. No seasonal workers are needed for periods totaling about 18 weeks. Each of the other crops has a different schedule for labor needs. For some, the periods of high labor need come at the same time, for example, grapes, tomatoes, and walnuts, while for others these periods either dovetail in such a way that workers can shift from one crop to another, or the peaks are so far apart that they necessitate irregular employment (Figure 2 and Table 3).

The figures shown are for 1963, and they would differ, to some extent, for any other year. Annual changes result from differences in acreages, yields, temperature, rainfall, and market conditions. Several days of hot weather during the harvest season for peaches or apricots may double the number of workers needed, and shorten their employment and earnings. Growers feel concerned when there is no reserve of labor available to meet such a situation.[1]

Major Types of Workers

There are several almost distinct types of workers employed in the fruit and vegetable operations in the county. One group is composed of the general farm workers who engage in tractor work, hualing, or other machine jobs, but are also likely to do pruning and irrigating to fill out the work year; on smaller farms, they may also pick fruit or nuts. Their jobs are essentially seasonal but involve some technical skill.

Ladder workers tend to shift from one ladder crop to another -- apricots and peaches in Stanislaus County, and cherries, oranges, pears, and apples outside the county -- they do pruning, thinning, and picking as the season progresses. This leaves significant gaps in their employment; however, some work in grapes, nuts, and berries is essential for them to make a living (Table 3).

Some vegetable workers are employed for hoeing and thinning during the spring and summer months, but the large operation is picking tomatoes in September and October. Practically all the vegetable workers are from Mexico. Anglo workers both avoid this work and are kept out of it by the employer preferences for non-Anglo labor.

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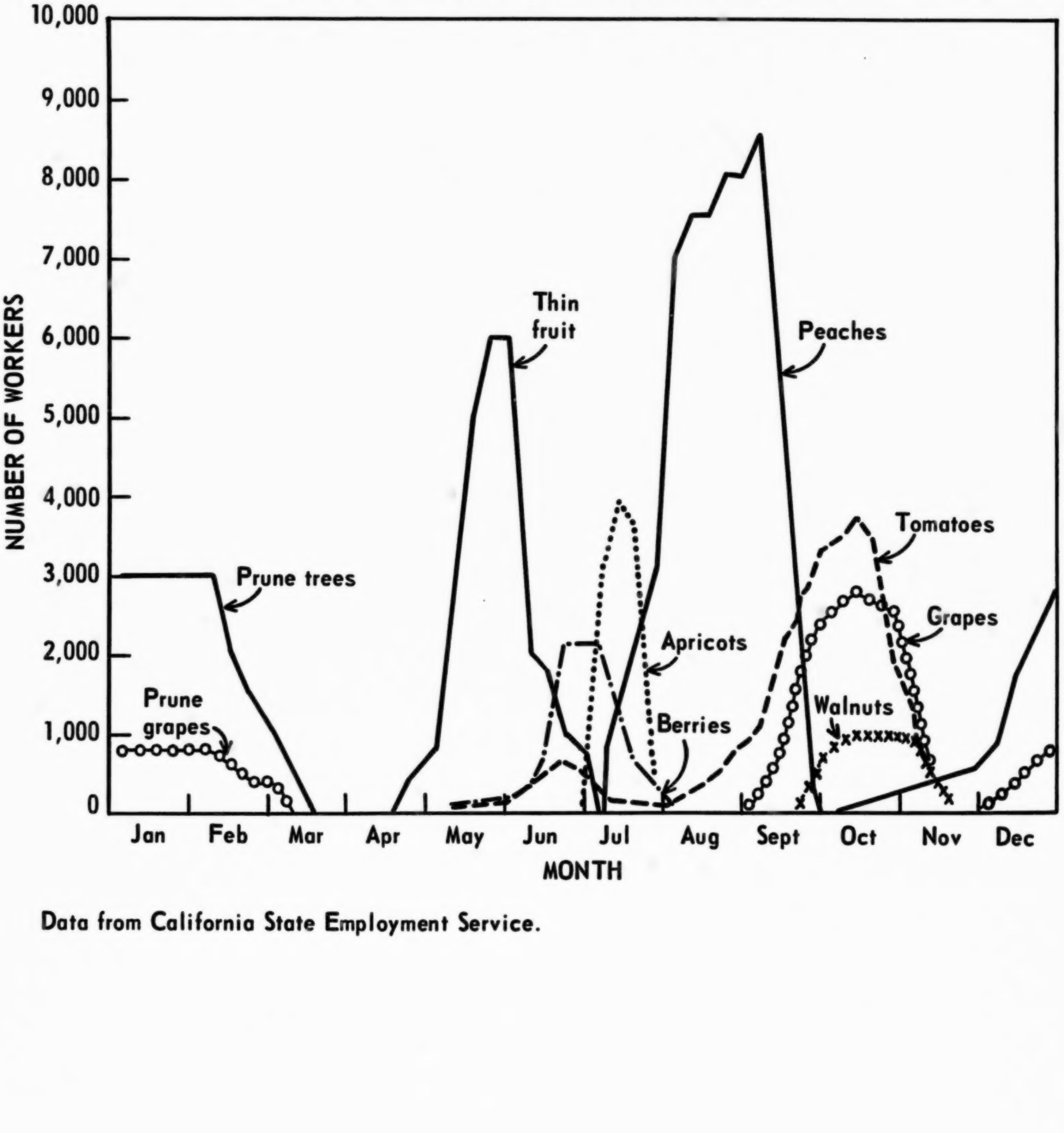
[1] Schwartz, Harry, Seasonal Labor in the United States, New York: Columbia University Press, 1945.

FIGURE 2

Labor Use in Major Crops – Stanislaus County – 1963.



Data from California State Employment Service.

TABLE 3

Labor Used in Major Crops in Stanislaus County, 1963[a]

Month and week	Total workers	Labor use in major crops						
		Peaches	Apricots	Grapes	All berries	All melons	Tomatoes	Almonds and walnuts
		workers						
January, 1st week	3,850	2,400	600	800	---	---	---	---
January, 3rd week	3,900	2,400	600	800	---	---	---	---
February, 1st week	3,880	2,400	600	800	---	---	---	---
February, 3rd week	1,950	1,200	300	400	---	---	---	---
March, 1st week	820	500	100	100	---	---	---	---
March, 3rd week	150	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
April, 1st week	100	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
April, 3rd week	300	---	200	---	---	---	---	---
May, 1st week	1,480	---	800	---	200	---	---	---
May, 3rd week	6,460	4,000	1,000	---	450	---	---	---
June, 1st week	4,550	2,000	---	---	510	190	390	---
June, 3rd week	5,820	1,000	---	---	2,300	400	610	---
July, 1st week	6,670	---	3,000	---	2,280	400	200	---
July, 3rd week	6,570	2,200	3,600	---	750	---	150	---
August, 1st week	9,040	7,500	---	---	70	450	250	---
August, 3rd week	11,030	8,000	---	---	---	770	680	300
September, 1st week	13,190	8,600	---	300	---	770	1,140	520
September, 3rd week	10,500	2,000	---	1,900	---	700	2,620	600
October, 1st week	10,570	---	---	2,600	---	200	3,400	1,370
October, 3rd week	10,540	---	---	2,600	---	100	3,490	1,340
November, 1st week	2,550	---	---	600	---	---	480	500
November, 3rd week	800	---	500	---	---	---	---	---
December, 1st week	1,200	400	500	200	---	---	---	---
December, 3rd week	2,740	1,500	500	550	---	---	---	---

[a] Data from California Weekly Farm Labor Reports, California Department of Employment, Sacramento, 1963.

The use of seasonal labor in picking grapes and berries dovetail very well with that in the tree fruits, but utilizes somewhat different labor forces. Tree fruit workers may pick berries because the entire family can work together as a unit. Some also work in the grape harvest, but this operation utilizes fewer family workers and a higher percentage of adult male Spanish-American and Mexican workers.

Seasonal Demand Patterns for These Types of Workers

The weekly estimates for Stanislaus County of the California State Employment Service can be utilized to show the week by week pattern of demand for workers in the foregoing groups.[1] They show three peaks and three troughs in the use of tree workers during the year, and that over 9,000 were used during the peak of the harvest while none were used during the latter part of March and early in April. The use of vegetable workers also fluctuated during the season, and 3,500 were used at the peak of the tomato harvest as compared to from 50 to 200 during a seven-month period (Figure 1 and Table 3).

Labor Use Trends

Data in regard to production trends, new plantings, the progress of mechanization, and other changes which affect labor use, indicate that the seasonal hired labor needs in the county are increasing and that some operations will be slow to yield to mechanization (Figures 3 and 4).[2] Some reductions in labor requirements in peach production have been made, for example, improved pruning of the trees so as to make the fruit more accessible, the use of bins and pallets instead of boxes, and the use of hydraulic lifts. Yet, the effect of these reductions has been outweighed by the increase in peach plantings. In 1963, there were 19,360 acres of bearing cling peaches in the county, and 4,713 acres which were not yet in bearing -- an anticipated increase of 24.3 percent.

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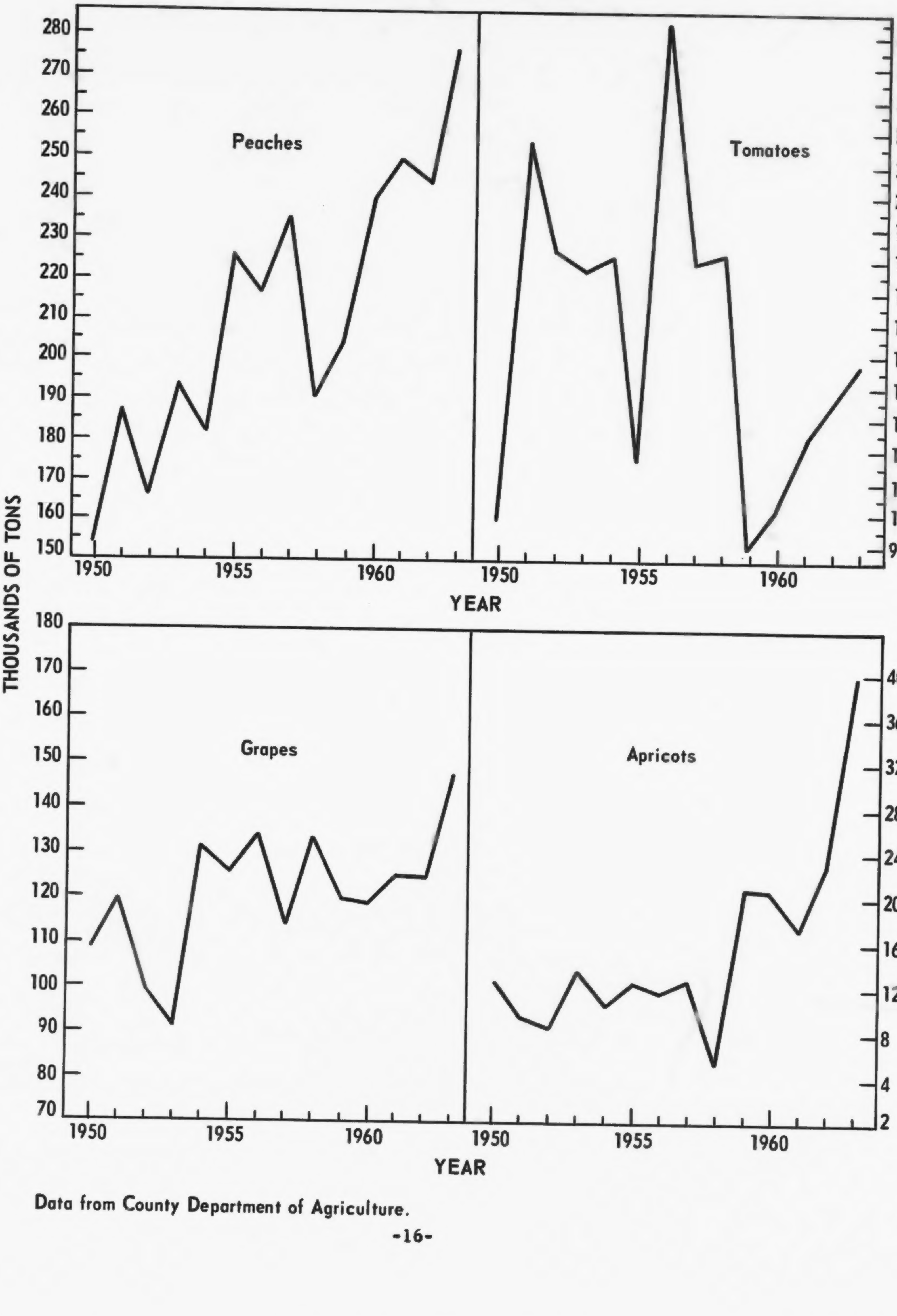
[1] For a commentary on these estimates, see Goepel, Wendy, and Paul O'Rourke, A Census of the Peak Season Farm Labor Force in Stanislaus County, 1963, Farm Workers Health Service, State Department of Public Health, Berkeley, 1964. The present survey substantiated the accuracy of their findings as to the size of the work force. Employment Service estimates in regard to the number of workers used are being scaled down.

[2] For advances in mechanization see, California Agricultural Labor Requirements and Adjustments, Berkeley: University of California, Division of Agricultural Sciences, 1964, pp. 124-44. For progress in mechanization of fruit crops see, Western Fruit Grower, June 1961, pp. 12-28.

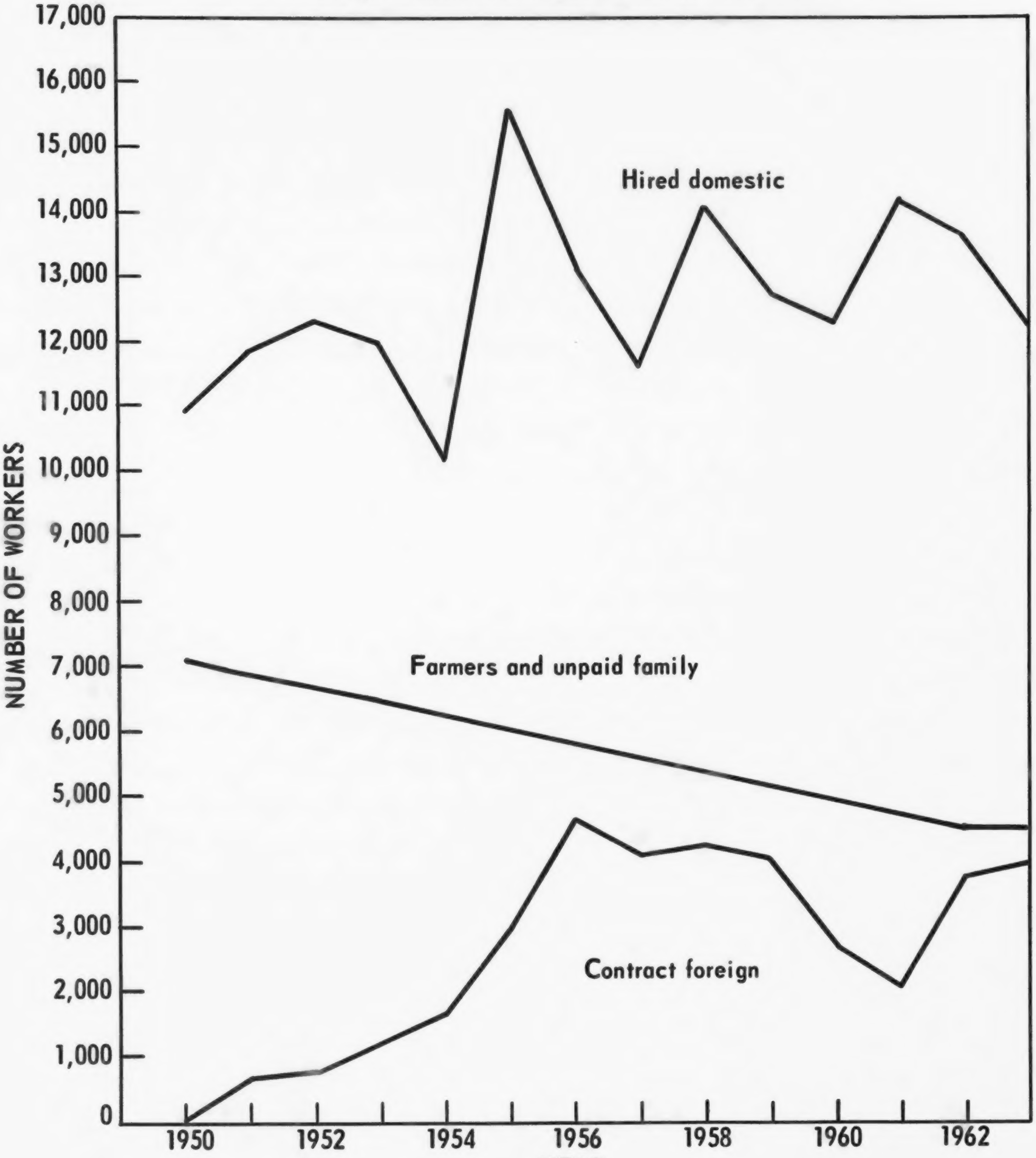
FIGURE 3
Production of Major Labor-Using Crops –
Stanislaus County – 1950-1963.



Data from County Department of Agriculture.

FIGURE 4

Number of Farm Family, Hired Domestic, and Contract Foreign Workers, Stanislaus County, 1950-1963.



Number in Peak Month Estimated by California State Department of Employment.

The increase in apricot acreage is almost as great as for the peaches, approximately 50 percent over the present bearing acreage. The apricots will increase the seasonal labor requirements just ahead of the peak periods of labor demand for peach thinning and harvest. The new plantings of almonds and walnuts may increase the labor needs during September and October. These changes will spread out the summer work season, yet summer labor requirements will be greatly increased as compared to those in the winter and spring seasons.

The vegetable crops, on the other hand, will tend toward greater stability in labor use. Mechanization will reduce the peak labor requirements in tomatoes and later in melons, and the jobs on the harvesting machines for these crops are likely to attract the local and migratory workers who work in the fruit operations.

According to the 1959 Census of Agriculture, the number of farms in the county had decreased by 11 percent since 1954.1/ Farm consolidation generally means some substitution of hired labor for family labor. The acreage of harvested cropland had increased during this period by 6.0 percent. The farm wage bill had increased by 25.5 percent, and the wage bill per hiring farm by 42.0 percent -- from $13,422 to $19,064. Wage rates had increased by 12.9 percent in the State during this period.2/ When the increased costs are deflated by the increase in wage rates, they indicate an increase of approximately 14.3 percent in the man-hours of hired labor in the county and an average of 25.9 percent per hiring farm.

Much of the approximately 3 percent annual increase in hired labor demand is associated with the continuing shift to more intensive use of the land. According to the 1963 report of the County Agricultural Commissioner, there were 17,611 acres of fruit trees and 1,199 acres of grapes in the county in 1963 which had not yet come into bearing.3/ Some of this increase is at the expense of berry, melon, and tomato acreages, so labor requirements in those crops may decline.

1/ Approximately one-fifth of the decrease was due to a change in the definition of a farm.

2/ Data from Farm Labor, U. S. Department of Agriculture, February 1961.

3/ Agricultural Crop Report, 1963, Stanislaus Department of Agriculture, Modesto, 1964.

Despite technological developments, the demand for hired labor in the county is increasing, and this increase may continue in the future. Furthermore, the need for seasonal workers at the peak period of the year, that is, when the Halford peaches are being picked during the last part of August and the first part of September, will increase even more rapidly than at the general level.

THE 1962-63 SURVEY: OBJECTIVES AND PROCEDURES

Seasonality of the harvest and of harvest work has been accepted as a product of nature, and most people have adjusted their activities accordingly. Yet as early as 1883, the State Commissioner of Agriculture raised the issue ". . . the manner of husbandry in the state was such as to assure those who work for others, work for only three, or at the highest, five or six months during the year. It was . . . an unnatural state of affairs, and one which should be remedied."[1]

The 1962-63 survey was designed to study the economic position of farm workers in an area of highly seasonal labor demands. Stanislaus County was selected for the study, partly because it meets the requirement for seasonal labor use, and partly because there is a group of farmers in the county who have been interested in solving their seasonal labor problem.

In 1961, a survey made in Kern County dealt with an area in which mechanization was making it possible to eliminate seasonal peaks of labor use and to put agriculture on the basis of year-round employment of a resident labor supply.[2] The present survey is of an area with a relatively permanent investment in crops with high seasonal labor requirements. While year-round employment of a local labor force is still a most important goal, present consideration has to be the development of a system of labor use which meets peak needs without entailing seasonal unemployment, seasonal welfare, family migration, or other adverse elements.

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[1] In First Biennial Report, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Sacramento, pp. 1883-84.

[2] Metzler, William H., Farm Mechanization and Labor Stabilization, Berkeley: University of California, Agr. Expt. Sta., Giannini Found. Res. Rept. No. 280, 1965.

The basic data for this study were obtained in interviews with farm workers. Explanatory and interpretative assistance was obtained from growers, labor contractors, fruit processors, public officials, and other persons closely associated with agriculture.

Enumeration and Sampling Procedure

The objective in the field work was to interview a 5 percent cross section of all the workers who had engaged in fruit or vegetable operations in the county during the previous year. The sample was designed to cover all types of workers in these operations, year-round and seasonal, local and migrant, domestic and foreign. Workers on dairy, livestock, poultry, and general farms were excluded. Workers who had spent a major part of their time at another occupation but had also engaged in farm work were included.

There are two major fruit and vegetable areas in the county -- the peach, grape, and nut area on the eastside around Modesto, Riverbank, Hughson, and Ceres, and the tomato, melon, and apricot area on the westside around Patterson, Westley, Vernalis, and Newman. There are three major peaks in labor use in the county and during each of these a somewhat different labor force is used. So three field surveys were needed to obtain a balanced sample. These peak periods were as follows:

September 10 to October 15, 1962:

Major operations -- picking tomatoes, grapes, almonds, and walnuts.
Estimated number of workers -- 7,000 to 9,000.
Fifty percent of workers on eastside, 50 percent on westside.
Major type of worker -- Anglo- and Spanish-American on eastside, Mexican National on westside.

May 1 to June 10, 1963:

Major operations -- thinning peaches, sugar beets, vegetables -- picking peas and strawberries.
Estimated number of workers -- 5,000 to 7,000.
Eighty percent workers on eastside, 20 percent on westside.
Major types of workers -- Anglo-American and green card Mexican on eastside, Mexican National and Spanish-American on westside.

August 10 to September 10, 1963:

Major operations -- picking peaches, melons, early tomatoes.
Estimated number of workers -- 9,000 to 12,000.
Eighty percent workers on eastside, 20 percent on westside.
Major types of workers -- Anglo-American and green card Mexican on eastside, Mexican National and Spanish-American on westside.

The objective was to obtain data in regard to worker characteristics, employment, migration, earnings, and plans for the future. Officials of the Farm Placement Service, the State Housing Office, and the County Housing Authority were consulted in regard to the number of workers and their location over the county. Quotas were set for each operation and area. The worker residential areas were marked off and a random selection of sample blocks made. Lists of transient camps, grower camps, and other such facilities were obtained, and sampling procedures were devised for them.

Housing facilities for the workers differed from area to area. Practically all the workers on the westside were housed in large camps. These were usually operated by a labor contractor, but two were operated by the County Housing Authority, and a few were operated by growers. Housing on the eastside was more varied. In most towns, there were residential areas in which the houses or cabins had been built by farm workers. In each town, there were transient camps or trailer camps in which most of the occupants were migrant workers. In Modesto a rooming-house area was occupied chiefly by single transients. Outside the towns and cities, many peach growers had camps which were open only at the peak season of the year. Several camps and residential areas were managed by public housing authorities.1/

The farm workers were contacted at home or in their camps after they had returned from work. All farm workers within the selected blocks in the towns were interviewed. In labor camps with separate cabins, a random selection of the cabins was made.

A three-time survey of the workers called for special procedures. The residential areas and the seasonal grower and labor contractor camps were only enumerated once, the transient facilities were enumerated two or three times, depending on the rate of turnover. It became apparent in rechecking these facilities, however, that this procedure was resulting in some underenumeration of transient workers. The rooming houses, trailer courts, and other transient facilities had a heavy turnover of occupants, due partially to the slowness of the 1963 peach season.

1/ For a more detailed statement in regard to the numbers and housing of domestic workers in the county, see Goepel, Wendy, and Paul O'Rourke, A Census of the Peak Season Farm Labor Force, Stanislaus County, 1963, Farm Workers Health Service, State Department of Public Health, Berkeley, 1964; also Dr. O'Rourke's testimony before the Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, California State Legislature, Sacramento, Feb. 19-20, 1964.

Much of the heavy turnover was that of workers who left during the early part of the peach harvest and they presumably were among the most migratory. Some of them left before they were able to obtain farm work, others had obtained very little. There are no records to provide an accurate basis for determining the number of workers involved.

Fewer workers were located in the worker residential blocks than had been anticipated. So additional blocks were checked. This check indicated that not over 10 percent of the houses once constructed and occupied by farm workers were now occupied by people connected with agriculture. The farm workers had either moved to other areas, to other employment, or both. A few farm workers lived in the nonfarm worker sections of Modesto and in other cities. These included a small number of high school and college youth who picked, hauled, or inspected peaches or other crops during the summer vacation period. The number of these workers was so small that it did not justify a search for them.

Abnormalties of the Survey Period

A marked change in the labor force between the 1962 and 1963 seasons presented a sampling problem. Very few green card workers were found during the first survey in September 1962. During the peach harvest in 1963, however, almost half of the workers were in this category. Hence the data represent a combination of the 1962 and 1963 seasons rather than the 1963 season.

During the fall of 1962, the tomato harvest progressed slowly because of the cool weather during the early period and the cannery quotas on deliveries during the rest of the harvest. This resulted in shorter work days and smaller earnings per day. The ample supply of labor may also have resulted in less employment per worker during the season.

The slowness of the 1963 peach harvest also had some effect on employment and earnings. An undetermined number of persons left without having obtained employment. This resulted in a reduction in the total number of people who would have worked in the harvest, and may have increased the employment and earnings for those who stayed.

THE WORKERS IN FRUIT AND VEGETABLES, STANISLAUS COUNTY

The fruit and vegetable workers in Stanislaus County in 1962-63 cannot be considered as a homogeneous labor force. About all that many of them had in common was that they did some work in fruit or vegetables in the county during the year. They came from widely different sources, at different times, and for a variety of reasons. In this report, they have been classified into groups which have greater homogeneity, and the totals for these groups are usually more meaningful than for the labor force as a whole.

Ethnic Group

The term ethnic group fits the type of classification made of these workers in only a very loose sense. These groupings are:

Anglo-American -- workers with an Anglo-Saxon or European background, largely from the Southwest -- 48 percent of the workers.

Spanish-American -- workers who migrated from Mexico some years ago and are part of the domestic labor force -- 14 percent of the workers.

Mexican National -- workers imported from Mexico under Public Law 78 to meet labor shortages in specific operations -- 22 percent of the workers.

Green card Mexican -- workers who came in under Public Law 414 as permanent residents. Most of them came in originally as Mexican Nationals but later became green card workers so that they could stay and engage in any type of work -- 13 percent of the workers.

Other -- included 14 Negroes, 3 Arabs, 2 Filipinos, 1 Puerto Rican, and 1 Guatamalan -- 2 percent of the workers.

Exact data are available in regard to the size of only one of these groups, the Mexican Nationals. The number imported was limited to the size of the labor shortage in specific lines of work. Few were used in the county before the tomato harvest. A peak of 3,790 were used in the county in October 1962 and 3,950 in October 1963.

The most elusive group to measure was the green card workers. Generally their families were still in Mexico and they moved over the State to find the most remunerative jobs. Estimates from the survey data indicate that from 2,000 to 2,400 worked in the county during the year.

The Anglo-Americans now constitute slightly less than half of the work force. This proportion, however, is most transitory. In fact, it changed during the course of the survey. At present, the movement of green card and Spanish-American workers into the county exceeds that of the Anglos; and the size of the imported group is subject to government action.

The few remaining workers, classed as "other," appear to be of decreasing importance. Several settlements of Negroes still remain in the county, a heritage from the days when several thousand acres were in cotton. A few Filipinos still come in to work in the grapes but they are getting too old to work regularly. The other workers were wanderers rather than being an established part of the work force.

Their Major Work

The workers were classified according to the type of work at which they had spent the most time during the 12 months before the interviews. Only 11 percent could qualify as general farm workers -- those who handle the mechanized equipment, supervise the workers, and fill in with such jobs as irrigating and pruning. A majority of these workers were actually seasonally employed to do such general farm tasks as cultivating, spraying, and hauling. Only 42 of the 905 workers covered in the survey were employed on the same farm for more than 100 days. Only the largest fruit and vegetable operations in this type of area provide an opportunity for year-round employment.

The major activity of 45 percent of the workers was in seasonal fruit operations, thinning, picking, pruning. These workers shifted from farm to farm and from one fruit or nut crop to another during the harvest season. Only a small proportion obtained work in pruning, irrigating, and other off-season jobs. Seventy percent of the Anglo-American workers in the county engaged chiefly in this type of work. A majority of the working wives and school youth also had their major employment in seasonal fruit operations.

Twenty-seven percent of the workers had their major employment in seasonal vegetable work. Only one Anglo worker was in the group, as compared to over one-fourth of the Spanish-American and green card workers, and 85 percent of the Mexican Nationals (Table 4). The majority of the Nationals picked tomatoes or melons, but the domestic workers were largely employed at hoeing, thinning, dusting, irrigating, and other cultural operations.

Seventeen percent of the workers had their major employment in processing or nonfarm operations, but also did some farm work. Those with above average employment in food processing included the wives, the local nonmigrants, and the Negroes. Those principally in nonfarm work included an above average proportion of the nonschool youth and the migrants who had moved to the county to stay.

TABLE 4

Major Work During Year, Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Ethnic Group, Household Status, and Migrancy

Group	All workers		Major work during year									
			General farm		Seasonal				Processing		Nonfarm	
					Fruit		Vegetable[a/]					
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Ethnic group												
Anglo-American	437	100	38	8	304	70	1	--	38	9	56	13
Spanish-American	129	100	28	22	39	30	37	29	9	7	16	12
Green card Mexican	120	100	23	19	52	43	32	27	3	3	10	8
Mexican National	198	100	10	5	2	1	168	85	--	--	18	9
Other b/	21	100	2	10	6	29	7	33	3	14	3	14
Household status												
Head	542	100	87	16	208	38	155	29	21	4	71	13
Wife c/	148	100	4	3	98	66	7	5	26	17	13	9
Nonschool youth	48	100	3	6	21	44	5	11	4	8	15	31
School youth	76	100	5	6	56	74	12	16	--	--	3	4
Other	91	100	2	2	20	22	66	73	2	2	1	1
Migrancy												
Local nonmigrant	240	100	33	14	128	53	19	8	34	14	26	11
Local outmigrant	120	100	7	6	93	77	4	3	7	6	9	8
Seasonal inmigrant												
Intrastate	78	100	7	9	51	65	5	7	3	4	12	15
Interstate	83	100	14	17	45	54	11	13	4	5	9	11
International	306	100	29	9	51	17	200	65	2	1	24	8
Permanent inmigrant[d/]	78	100	11	14	35	45	6	8	3	4	23	29
All workers	905	100	101	11	403	45	245	27	53	6	103	11

a/ Includes 41 sugar beet workers.

b/ Includes 14 Negroes, 3 Arabs, 2 Filipinos, 1 Puerto Rican, and 1 Guatamalan.

c/ Includes 19 female heads of households.

d/ Includes all nonseasonal inmigrants.

Ethnic Changes

The largest ethnic group in the farm work force in fruit and vegetable operations in the county in the past has been the Anglo-Americans. These include the Dust Bowl migrants from the Southwest, their descendants, and more recent migrants from the same area. The recent influx of Spanish-Americans, green card Mexicans, and Mexican Nationals has now made the Mexican-American the most numerous group (Table 5). At one time these workers performed the "stoop labor" operations; now the Spanish-American and green card workers are performing all types of farm and nonfarm work. The proportion who are in general farm work is almost twice as great as for the Anglo-Americans.

The change toward a Mexican-American work force is not without friction. Many of the Anglo and Negro workers who were interviewed complained that they were no longer able to obtain employment on the farms on which they had worked for many years. Some Spanish-American workers also expressed resentment against the new entrants from Mexico, but others provided them with housing and job contacts. While Spanish-American and Mexican workers are moving into the jobs traditionally held by the Anglos, there is no movement in the opposite direction. The percentage of workers in the various ethnic groups compared with the percentage of jobs that were held by these workers was as follows:

	Anglo-American	Spanish-American	Green card Mexican	Mexican National	Other
Percentage of workers	49	14	13	22	2
Percentage of jobs in					
Tree pruning	72	13	13	--	2
Peach thinning	68	10	20	--	2
Peach harvest	65	9	22	--	4
Apricot harvest	65	15	16	--	4
Berry harvest	65	12	12	10	1
Almonds, walnuts	68	17	14	--	1
Grape pruning	48	29	14	--	9
Grape picking	48	18	27	3	4
Melon harvest	--	8	14	77	1
Tomato harvest	1	2	9	87	1

Problem of the Anglo-Americans

Although the Anglo-American workers have been the basic work force in fruit operations in the county, their position in the labor force is insecure. Over half of them have settled in the communities in the county and make their living from seasonal farm jobs and other casual employment. Approximately one-third migrate out of the county during the year to obtain additional work.

TABLE 5

Ethnic Characteristics of the Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Major Work, Household Status, and Migrancy

Group	Ethnic group											
	All workers		Anglo-American		Spanish-American		Green card Mexican		Mexican National		Other[a]	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Major work												
General farm	101	100	38	37	28	28	23	23	10	10	2	2
Seasonal fruit	403	100	304	75	39	10	52	13	2	--	6	2
Seasonal vegetable[b]	245	100	1	--	37	15	32	13	168	69	7	3
Processing	53	100	38	71	9	17	3	6	--	--	3	6
Nonfarm	103	100	56	54	16	16	10	10	18	17	3	3
Household status												
Head	542	100	230	42	64	12	93	17	138	26	17	3
Wife[c]	148	100	122	83	21	14	2	1	--	--	3	2
Nonschool youth	48	100	18	38	12	25	18	37	--	--	--	--
School youth	76	100	52	69	23	30	--	--	--	--	1	1
Other	91	100	15	16	9	10	7	8	60	66	--	--
Migrancy												
Local nonmigrant	240	100	171	71	65	27	2	1	--	--	2	1
Local outmigrant	120	100	96	80	15	12	2	2	--	--	7	6
Seasonal inmigrant												
Intrastate	78	100	58	74	13	17	3	4	--	--	4	5
Interstate	83	100	57	69	20	24	1	1	--	--	5	6
International	306	100	--	--	--	--	106	34	198	65	2	1
Permanent inmigrant[d]	78	100	55	71	16	20	6	8	--	--	1	1
All workers	905	100	437	49	129	14	120	13	198	22	21	2

[a] Includes 14 Negroes, 3 Arabs, 2 Filipinos, 1 Indian, and 1 Puerto Rican.

[b] Includes 41 workers who thinned sugar beets.

[c] Includes 19 female heads of households.

[d] Includes all nonseasonal inmigrants.

Yet farmers complain that they are unreliable, and cite examples of their doing poor work or leaving a job when they were badly needed.[1] Their background was largely that of small farmers and they brought with them the independence of the small proprietor. This background has not fitted in well with the inflexible demands for labor that are typical of fruit and vegetable operations. This basic maladjustment has been obvious both to the growers and to the workers for some time. These workers express dissatisfaction with seasonal farm work, but find it difficult to return to farming or to move into nonfarm employment. Those who dislike routine may be better adapted to irregular and sporadic farm jobs than for occupations which have exacting time requirements.

The Mexican Nationals

Public Law 78 provided for the importation of workers from Mexico to perform those farm jobs for which there was a shortage of domestic labor. The labor shortage and the number required were to be certified by the Department of Labor. The imported workers were to be paid the prevailing wage, provided with housing and meals, and be given employment for three-fourths of the time during the contract period.[2] These workers were brought in when needed and returned to Mexico when the need for them was over. While here, the contracting association shifted them from one employer to another to meet their employment guarantees.

Although the chief use of Mexican Nationals in Stanislaus County was in the tomato harvest, they were also used in several other crops, and at times of the year when many local farm workers were unemployed (Table 6). This comes about because of the lack of adjustment between the work force and job structure. Growers of vegetables could not obtain workers willing to do stoop labor and had to resort to the use of imported workers.

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[1] For statements by California growers, see Hearings, California Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, El Centro, Jan. 15, 1960, pp. 22-39, 108-116, 122-138; Sacramento, Jan. 27-28, 1960, pp. 317-327, 329-331, 333-350, 452-466. Also Migratory Labor Hearings, Subcommittee on Migratory Labor of Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate, 87th Congress, Vol. 2, Feb. 1962, pp. 708-26.

[2] Mexican Farm Labor Program, Hearings, Subcommittee on Equipment, Supplies, and Manpower, Committee on Agriculture, House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 1st Ses., Washington, March 1963.

Public Law 78 was terminated on December 31, 1964.

TABLE 6

Use of Mexican Nationals, Stanislaus County, 1963

Week ending	Crop								
	Berries a/	Sugar beets	Tomatoes	Melons	Lettuce	Grapes	Peppers	Miscellaneous vegetables b/	Total
	workers								
May 18	30								30
May 25	70								70
June 1	60	20	50						130
June 8	60	70	200	30					360
June 15	40	80	330	190				40	680
June 22	70	100	200	190				40	600
June 29	160	100	230	100				40	630
July 6	190	80	50	140				40	500
July 13	290	100	40	190				80	700
July 20	30	110	60	100				50	350
July 27		70		70				70	210
August 3		70		140				80	290
August 10		90	150	250				80	570
August 17		80	290	300	40			100	810
August 24		60	400	310	100			100	970
August 31			470	310	100			100	980
September 7			810	310	40			100	1,260
September 14			1,470	310		80		110	1,970
September 21			2,150	310		150		100	2,710
September 28			2,680	310	30	250	330	50	3,650
October 5			2,790	100	100	450	330	140	3,910
October 12			2,910	80	200	400	230	130	3,950
October 19			2,740	40	200	260	230	130	3,600
October 26			1,560	20	200	300	190	170	2,440
November 2			820		150	100	110	210	1,390
November 9			250		70		40	60	420
November 16								200	200

a/ Includes both strawberries and bushberries.

b/ Mostly hoeing but includes harvest of cauliflower.

All but a few of the braceros interviewed worked for labor contractors who had contracts to pick the melons and tomatoes on the westside of the county. Most of the workers lived in large camps with a capacity of from 150 to 850 persons.

These workers were questioned in regard to their work in Mexico before coming to the United States. The answers were difficult to classify because the job structure in Mexico is quite different from that in the United States. Apparently some have small farms, largely self-sufficing in nature, and, in addition, engage in any seasonal and casual labor that is available. Since their hired farm work often included plowing and planting, some were classified as general farm workers. Although these workers have been included with those who did general farm work in the United States, they functioned at a less technical level.

The major work reported by the braceros in Mexico was as follows:

	Workers	Percent
Farm operator or work on family farm	72	37
Farm worker	64	32
Nonfarm worker	28	14
In business	4	2
None	30	15

The Green Card Mexicans

The McCarren-Walter Act of 1952 (Public Law 414) also provided for the admission of workers to agricultural labor shortage areas in the United States. Two types of entry were permitted. First, as permanent residents; and second, as temporary contract workers to meet specific shortages.[1] The workers in Stanislaus County had permanent (green card) visas. Most of them had come into the county originally as Mexican Nationals or as "wetbacks." Growers encouraged braceros who had been particularly valuable to return as permanent residents. As a result, they were a highly selected group of workers. When they returned, they were free to do any type of work, farm or nonfarm, for any employer. Hence many moved into general farm or nonfarm employment. In Stanislaus County they looked for the jobs regularly held by the Anglo- and Spanish-American workers, but left the tomato picking to the braceros.

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[1] California Farm Labor Problems, Part I, Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, 1961.

Green card workers move into nonfarm employment very rapidly. According to Immigration Service reports 242,384 of them registered in California during the alien registration period in January 1963. The estimated number of green card workers still in agriculture in September 1962 was from 33,000 to 38,000.[1]

Household Status

The household status of the workers in the sample was as follows:

	Number	Percent of total
Heads (male)	542	60
Wives and female heads	148	16
Nonschool youth	48	5
School youth	76	9
Other	91	10

All Mexican Nationals who were not heads of families (60) were classified as "other" because detailed data in regard to their family connections were not obtained.

In specialty agriculture, the lighter jobs were adapted to family labor, while the heavier and more responsible ones ordinarily are handled only by adult males. Of the jobs in Stanislaus County, picking berries, almonds, and walnuts provided employment for all members of the family. Women and youth also picked apricots, peaches, and grapes but they were a less important part of the work force for these crops.

The proportion of women and youth in seasonal fruit jobs was 42 percent, but it was only 10 percent in work in vegetables. In the latter case, their work was likely to be in the nature of checking boxes, keeping books, or sorting out culls rather than regular field work. The number of women who worked in the packingsheds and canneries exceeded the number of men.

The family composition of the work force in the county was affected by the large number of Mexican National and green card workers. Although 138 of the 198 Mexican Nationals had families, they were not permitted to bring them along. Most of the 120 green card Mexicans also were heads of families, but only 13 had brought their families to Stanislaus County.

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[1] Mexican Farm Labor Program Hearings, Subcommittee on Equipment, Supplies, and Manpower of Committee on Agriculture, House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 1st Ses., Mar. 1963, Serial D, p. 329.

All workers were questioned in regard to their families, but only those whose families were with them were questioned in regard to the work and earnings of each member. The average size of all family groups was 4.1 members (Table 7). Anglo-American families were smaller than this, 3.4 members. The largest families were those of the green card workers, 5.5 members. The average size of the families of the Mexican National workers was only 4.1 members because of the high proportion who were single. When the singles are excluded, the average family size for the Nationals with families also stood at 5.5 members.

The data as to number of workers per family were obtained only for those workers who had their families with them. The number was slightly less than two for both the Anglo-American and the Spanish-American families.

The family work pattern of Anglo-American and Spanish-American workers differed. The proportion of working wives was greater among the Anglo-Americans, but Spanish-American youth were almost twice as likely to work as the youth in the Anglo families (Appendix Tables 1 and 2). The Anglo wives were largely employed in fruit and processing operations. The school youth also were largely employed in fruit work but the nonschool youth reported that most of their work was in nonfarm employment.

MIGRANCY OF THE WORKERS

Most of the fruit and vegetable workers in Stanislaus County are parts of two major population movements -- one from the small farming areas in the southwestern states, the other from the overpopulated agricultural areas of central Mexico. Both movements are from areas of limited economic opportunity to one that is expanding rapidly. Seasonal farm work in California offers one of the most readily available sources of temporary employment for people who are seeking a new position in the economy. Although this type of work may have disadvantages, it serves as a lookout post in an area with numerous economic opportunities. The chance for workers to move into more regular work depends largely on whether they have the skills and the orientation that are required to function in the nonfarm employment structure.

In a broad sense, most all of the fruit and vegetable workers in the county can be considered as migrants. Even those who have constructed or purchased homes in the county tend to be underemployed and watch for more secure employment locally or in other areas. Although a much more limited concept of migrancy is

TABLE 7

Household Characteristics of the Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Ethnic Group

Item	Ethnic group					
	All households	Anglo-American	Spanish-American	Green card Mexican	Mexican National	Other
	number					
Total households	644	248	68	113	198	17
Total persons	2,647	840	328	626	803	50
Total workers	905[a]	437	129	120[a]	198[a]	21
Persons per family	4.1	3.4	4.8	5.5	4.1	2.9
Workers per family	[a]	1.8	1.9	[a]	[a]	1.2
Singles	124	42	9	4	60	9
Families	520	206	59	109	138	8
Family elsewhere	273	23	12	100	138	--
Family here	247	183	47	9	--	8

[a] No data obtained in regard to work of family members in Mexico.

used later in this report -- the movements of the workers during the last 12 months -- this should not obscure the broad changes which are underway. This type of agriculture is serving as a way-station in the readjustment of farm people into a new position in the economy.

When They First Came to the County

Some people still think of the Dust Bowl migrants of the thirties as being the backbone of the farm labor force in this county. However, these migrants have almost disappeared and we find instead that half of the hired workers had first come to the county during the last seven or eight years (Table 8). At present, migrants from the Dust Bowl area constitute not over 4 percent of the work force for fruit and vegetable jobs.

The proportion of the Anglo-American workers who are longtime residents is surprisingly small. Only 13 percent of the Anglo-American heads of households had first come to the county during the thirties, and 28 percent more during the forties (Table 8). On the other hand, 59 percent had come in since 1950, 36 percent during the fifties, and 23 percent during the last three years. The recent movement of Anglo workers into work in the county is notable. Their chance to remain is small because of irregular employment and lack of housing.

The Spanish-American and Negro workers are even more recent entrants. Almost four out of five of the Spanish-American heads of households and almost two out of three of the Negroes have come in since 1954. Data were not obtained as to how much of this recent movement was associated with mechanization of the cotton harvest in California or the Southwest, but some workers were still picking as much cotton as they could.

The bracero and green card workers were not questioned as to the first year they came to the county, but as to the first year they had come to the United States. Only 7 percent had come in before 1950; more of the green cards than the braceros had come in during the fifties, 39 percent as compared to 26 percent (Table 9). A total of 54 percent of the green cards and 67 percent of the braceros had first come in during the last three years. Some of those who first came in during the forties or fifties pointed out that they had not come in annually since their first entry. Each entry required a separate effort and they had not always been accepted.

TABLE 8

Where Farm Labor Households Came From, When, and Where Their Home Now is, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Ethnic Group

Item	All workers		Ethnic group									
			Anglo-American		Spanish-American		Green card Mexican		Mexican National		Other	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Origin												
Born here	9	1	7	3	2	3	--	--	--	--	--	--
Elsewhere in California	97	15	65	26	25	37	--	--	--	--	7	41
Oklahoma	63	9	62	25	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--
Texas	56	8	22	9	31	46	2	2	--	--	1	6
Arkansas	23	4	23	9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Other states	79	13	68	27	6	9	--	--	--	--	5	29
Mexico	311	49	--	--	3	4	110	97	198	100	--	--
Other country	6	1	1	1	--	--	1	1	--	--	4	24
Total	644	100	248	100	68	100	113	100	198	100	17	100
First year in county												
Before 1940	35	11	31	13	3	4	a/	a/	a/	a/	1	6
1940-49	80	24	70	28	7	10	--	--	--	--	3	18
1950-54	51	15	44	18	5	7	--	--	--	--	2	12
1955-59	69	21	44	18	22	33	--	--	--	--	3	17
1960-63	96	29	57	23	31	46	--	--	--	--	8	47
Total	331[a]	100	246	100	68	100	--	--	--	--	17	100
Home base												
Stanislaus County	224	35	171	73	39	57	10	8	--	--	4	33
Other county in California	31	5	17	7	10	15	2	2	--	--	2	17
Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas	42	7	18	8	18	26	3	3	--	--	3	25
Other state	36	6	30	12	1	2	2	2	--	--	3	25
Mexico	294	47	--	--	--	--	96	85	198	100	--	--
Total	627[b]	100	236	100	68	100	113	100	198	100	12	100

a/ Data not obtained for Mexican workers. See Table 9.

b/ Data not obtained for 17 workers.

TABLE 9

When Mexican Farm Workers First Came to the United States

Year	All Mexican workers		Type of worker			
			Mexican National		Green card	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Before 1945	8	3	4	2	4	3
1945-1949	15	5	10	5	5	4
1950-1954	34	11	20	10	14	13
1955-1959	61	20	32	16	29	26
1960-1961	52	16	38	19	14	13
1962-1963	140	45	94	48	46	41
Total	310	100	198	100	112[a]	100

[a] Data not obtained for eight green card workers.

Where They Came From

Even though few of these workers were Dust Bowlers, the main stream of movement was still from the southwestern states. Forty-three percent of the Anglo-American heads of households came from Oklahoma, Texas, or Arkansas, and 46 percent of the Spanish-Americans came from Texas (Table 8). The major movement within California was from the cotton counties -- Tulare, Kern, or Fresno.

Where is Their Home

Almost three-fourths of the Anglo-American heads of households stated that they now regarded Stanislaus County as their home. Only 8 percent stated that it still was in Oklahoma, Arkansas, or Texas. On the other hand, 26 percent of the Spanish-American workers stated that their home still was in Texas. Apparently the Anglo workers are more sure that their move is permanent.

Migrancy During the Past Year

A detailed record of the workers' jobs and movements was obtained for the 12-month period before the time of their interview. These records provide a definite basis for classifying the migrancy of the workers during this short period. The classification is as follows:

Local nonmigrant--both their home and all their work for the past year have been in Stanislaus County -- 26 percent of all workers (Table 10).

Local outmigrant--their home in Stanislaus County but they leave it for part of the year to work elsewhere -- 13 percent of all workers.

Seasonal inmigrant--their home is outside the county and they came in to do seasonal work. They will leave when the season is over. They constitute 52 percent of the workers, and are divided as follows -- intrastate, 9 percent; interstate, 9 percent; international, 34 percent.

Other inmigrants--those who came in to stay rather than to do seasonal work and leave. Nine percent are in this group. Of these, some say their move is permanent, while others are not certain that they will be able to stay.

The unstable position of this last group of workers in the economy is reflected in their high rate of migrancy during the past year. Approximately three-fourths of them had moved into or out of the county during that time. Although this high percentage is partly due to the large number of workers from Mexico, (only 8 percent of the vegetable workers had not migrated into the county), 61 percent of all Anglo-American workers had migrated during the year.

TABLE 10

Migrancy of Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1963, by Ethnic Group, Major Employment, and Household Status

Group	All workers		Migrancy											
			Local				Seasonal inmigrant						Other inmigrant	
			Non-migrant		Out-migrant		Intra-state		Inter-state		Inter-national			
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Ethnic group														
Anglo-American	437	100	171	39	96	22	58	13	57	13	--	--	55	13
Spanish-American	129	100	65	50	15	12	13	10	20	16	--	--	16	12
Mexican National	198	100	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	198	100	--	--
Green Card Mexican	120	100	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	106	88	6	5
Other	21	100	2	10	7	33	4	19	5	24	2	9	1	5
Major work														
General farm	100	100	33	33	7	7	7	7	14	14	28	28	11	11
Seasonal fruit	403	100	128	32	93	23	51	13	45	11	51	13	35	8
Seasonal vegetable	245	100	19	8	4	2	5	2	11	4	200	82	6	2
Processing	53	100	34	64	7	13	3	6	4	7	2	4	3	6
Nonfarm	104	100	26	25	9	9	12	11	9	9	25	24	23	22
Family status														
Head	542	100	125	23	61	11	46	9	46	8	222	41	42	8
Wife	148	100	59	40	33	22	16	11	16	11	1	1	23	15
School youth	76	100	25	33	22	29	9	12	13	17	--	--	7	9
Nonschool youth	48	100	18	38	2	4	4	8	5	11	16	33	3	6
Other	91	100	13	14	2	2	3	3	3	4	67	74	3	4
All workers	905	100	240	26	120	13	78	9	83	9	306	34	78	9

The two most stable groups in the work force were the Spanish-American workers and those workers who engaged in fruit processing. The lower rate of migrancy among the Spanish-American workers (50 percent) was associated with their higher rate of employment in general farm work. That among food processing workers (36 percent) apparently was related to higher rates of pay, unemployment insurance, and the desire to be on hand for the next season. Food processing employment appears to be a highly stabilizing factor for this group of workers.

Outmigration to other work areas was most common among the Anglo-American workers, so also was migration into the county to become permanent residents. Outmigration was associated with seasonal fruit work.

Paths of Movement

The paths of movement of the workers during the previous years are shown in Figures 5, 6, and 7. The most identifiable paths were:

For the Anglo-Americans -- all or some portion of four movements:

1. From Tulare County to peach thinning in Stanislaus County, to cherries in San Joaquin County or Oregon, to apricots in Santa Clara or San Benito counties, to the peach harvest in Stanislaus County, and back to work in the oranges and olives in Tulare County. Some went to the apple harvest in Washington before returning home.
2. From Arizona or Arkansas to follow the path above.
3. From Stanislaus County to follow the path above.
4. From Arizona or Arkansas to the peach harvest in Stanislaus County and return to home base.

For the Spanish-Americans:

From Imperial or Fresno county, Arizona, or Texas to peach thinning and the peach harvest in Stanislaus County and back to home base. Some scattered movement during the fall to the prune harvest in Colusa County or the grape harvest in San Joaquin County.

For the green card Mexicans:

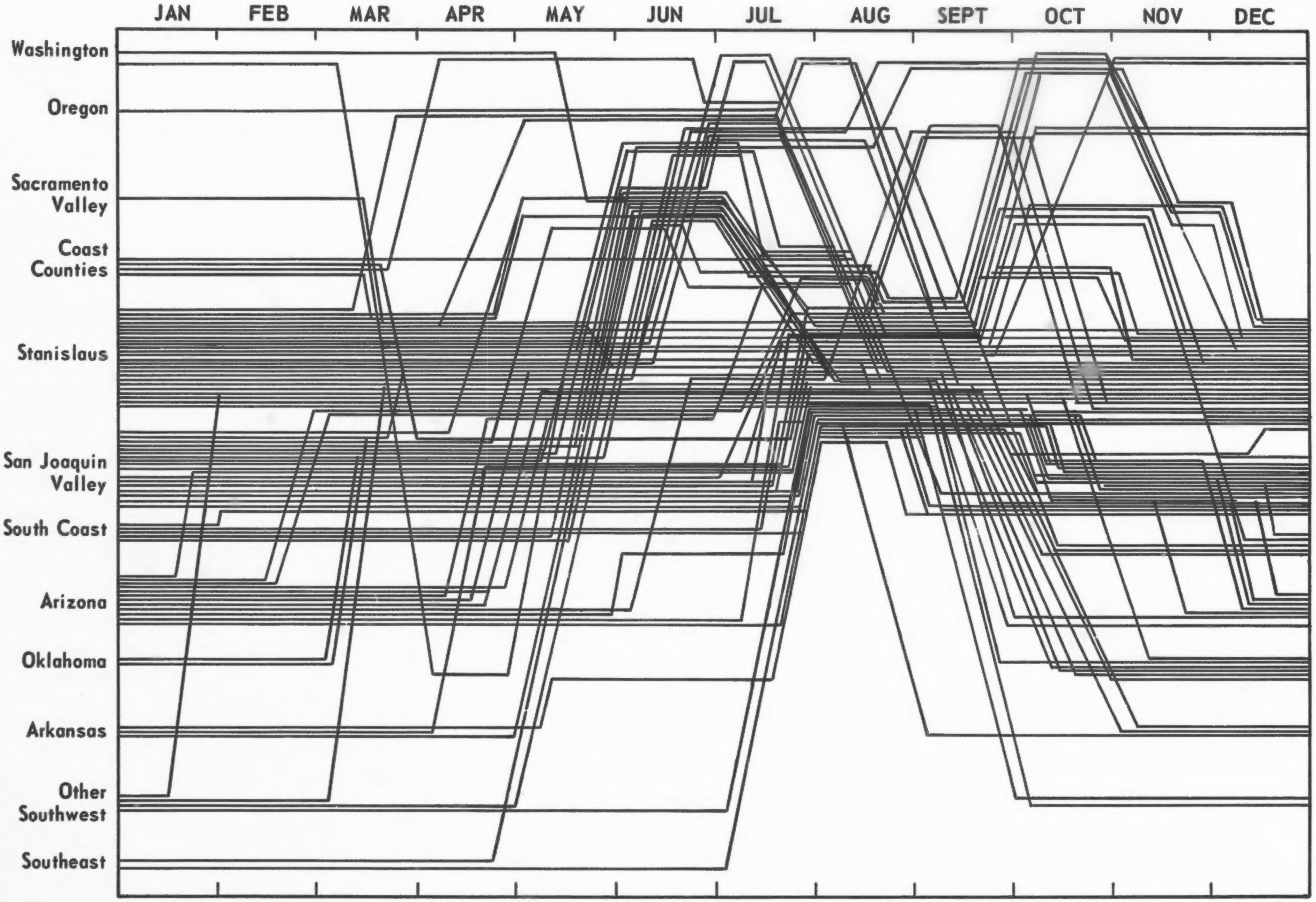
From Mexico to citrus in the Los Angeles area, to vegetable work or peach thinning in Stanislaus County. Stay through peach harvest in Stanislaus. Some work in grapes or citrus on the way back.

For the Mexican Nationals:

A few worked in Imperial or Kern counties but most came direct to Stanislaus. Return direct to Mexico.

FIGURE 5

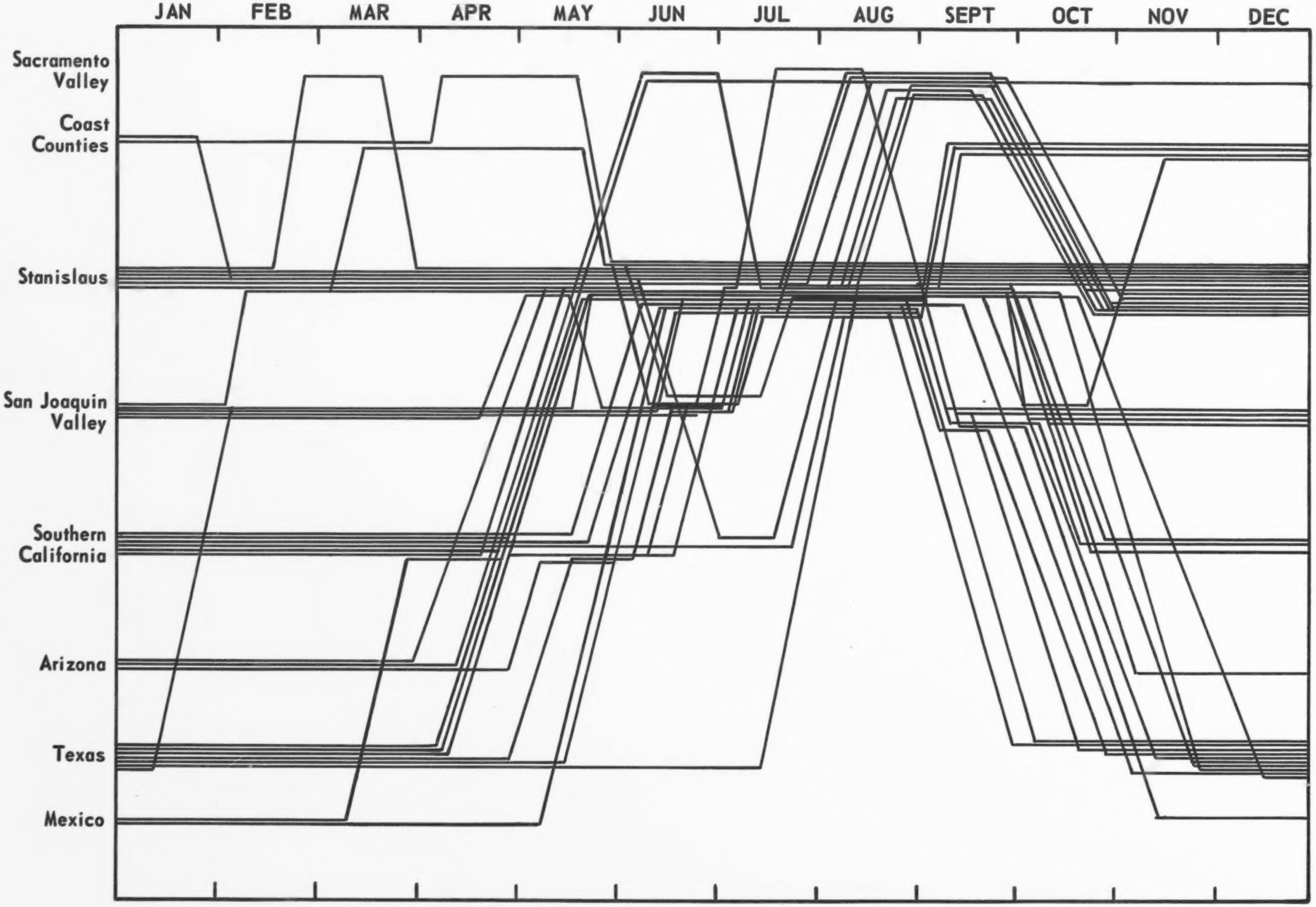
Movement of Anglo-American Farm Workers During Previous Year, 1962-1963.



Data from 1962-1963 Survey of Farm Workers in Stanislaus County – 226 Workers

FIGURE 6

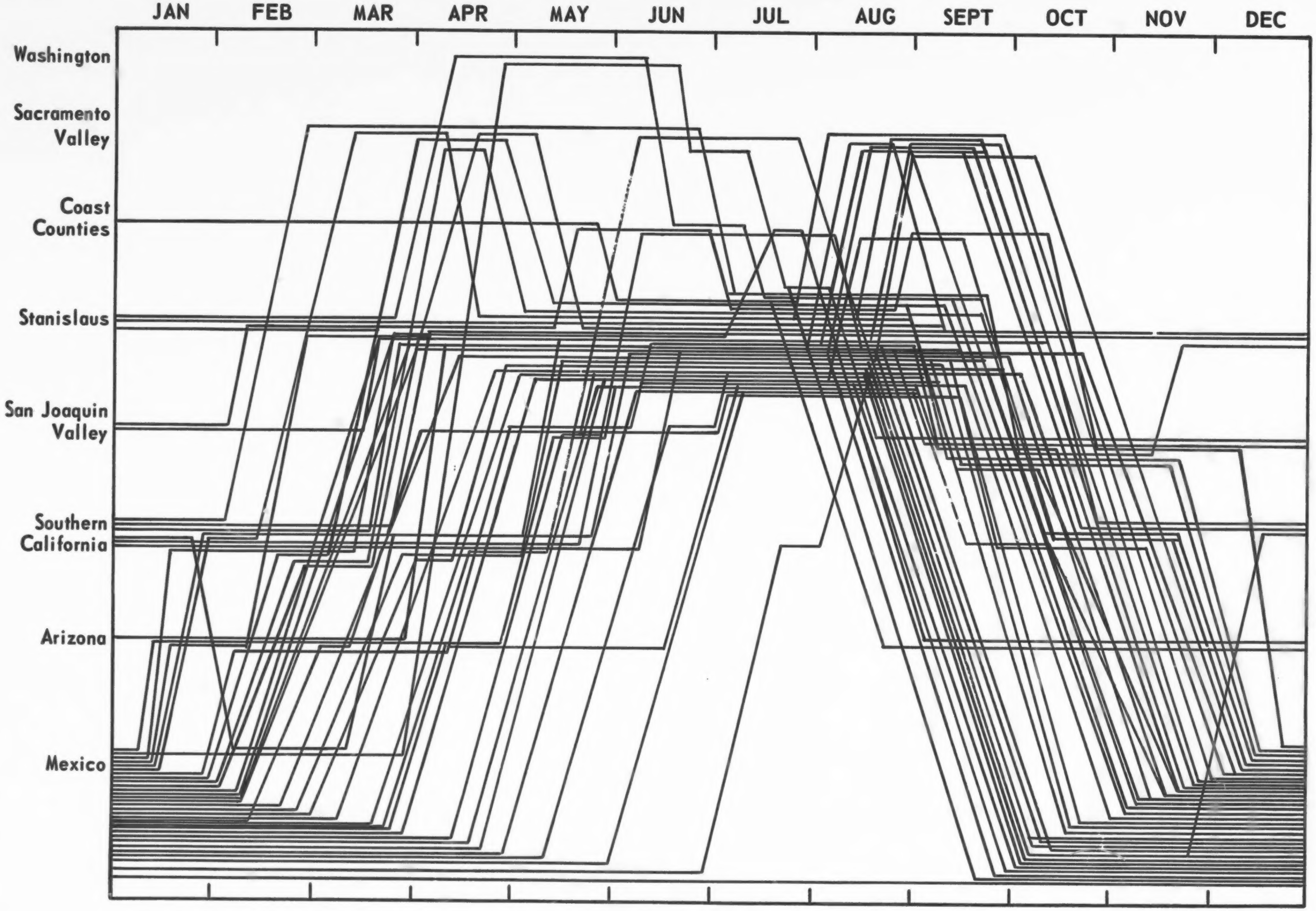
Movement of Spanish-American Farm Workers During Previous Year, 1962-1963.



Data from 1962-1963 Survey — 64 Workers.

FIGURE 7

Movement of Green Card Workers During Previous Year, 1962-1963.



Data from 1962-1963 Survey of Farm Workers in Stanislaus County – 118 Workers.

Location of the Jobs Held

The workers reported a total of 3,554 jobs and of these approximately 60 percent were in Stanislaus County; 29 percent were in other counties in the State; 8 percent were in other states; and almost 3 percent were in Mexico (Appendix Table 3). A high proportion of the jobs in peaches, almonds, walnuts, berries, and in cannery work were located in Stanislaus County. The other jobs of major importance and their location included the following: picking citrus and olives in Tulare County; picking cherries in San Joaquin County or in Oregon or Washington; general farm work in Texas, Oklahoma, or Mexico; cutting asparagus in San Joaquin County; picking cotton in Texas or Oklahoma; picking apples or pears in Oregon or Washington. These jobs point to migration patterns which have persisted through several decades. The major difference is in the small number of workers in the cotton harvest, particularly in the San Joaquin Valley.

EXTENT OF EMPLOYMENT

The farm workers covered in the survey had an average of 128 days of work during the 12 months before the time the interviews were taken (Table 11). This figure is less meaningful than that for specific groups in the labor force, because it covers such a wide array of people. It includes the days of employment of wives, youth, and Mexican Nationals, some of whom were in the labor market less than a full year. It also includes the employment of general farm workers and of cannery and other workers who combined farm and nonfarm work. Some of the latter did farm work only as a supplement to nonfarm employment.

By Major Employment

The general farm workers had closest to full employment of any group in the survey, an average of 190 days, 203 days for heads of households.

The seasonal fruit workers averaged 106 days, but this spreads out as follows: heads of households 143 days, of which nine were in nonfarm work, wives 69 days, out-of-school youth 112, and school youth 41. This is the largest occupational group in the survey and the one which includes most of the Anglo-American workers. The figures indicate, in a general way, the amount of work that the workers can expect to obtain from seasonal work in deciduous fruit crops.

TABLE 11

Average Days of Total and Nonfarm Employment During the Previous Year, Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1963, by Household Status, Major Work, Ethnic Group, and Migrancy

Group	Days worked, by household status											
	Heads		Wives[a]		Nonschool youth		School youth		Others		All workers	
	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm
	days											
Major work												
General	203	10	143	--	223	--	36	--	10	--	190	9
Fruit work	143	9	69	4	112	5	41	2	75	1	106	6
Vegetable work	118	3	83	9	107	11	83	6	116	--	115	3
Processing	175	127	101	93	178	102	--	--	64	43	135	106
Nonfarm	183	134	150	120	218	172	75	53	94	54	180	135
Ethnic group												
Anglo-American	153	40	79	25	129	65	39	5	55	--	115	31
Spanish-American	199	32	92	46	172	71	71	6	101	10	150	31
Green card Mexican	170	17	131	--	144	15	--	--	95	2	162	16
Mexican National	116	14	--	--	--	--	--	--	124	14[b]	119	14
Other	149	32	166	137	--	--	20	--	--	--	145	46
Migrancy												
Local nonmigrant	163	35	71	39	153	91	36	3	53	7	120	35
Local outmigrant	156	22	87	26	199	33	44	4	131	--	115	19
Seasonal inmigrant:												
Intrastate	158	33	97	13	132	29	61	23	131	--	132	25
Interstate	169	54	115	24	154	--	82	--	97	--	142	34
International	134	12	120	--	144	15	--	--	123	13[b]	132	13
Other inmigrants	178	67	75	31	228	123	38	--	13	--	136	48
All workers	152	28	83	30	147	29	49	4	101	10	128	26
All domestic workers	164	33	83	30	147	29	49	4	66	4	129	29

a/ Includes female heads of households.

b/ Includes employment in Mexico.

The data for vegetable workers are less clear-cut because many of them were Mexican Nationals who were in the labor market for only part of the year. The vegetable workers averaged 115 days of work, 118 for heads of households.

Processing work is subject to much the same seasonality as farm work. The length of the operating season of a cannery or packingshed depends to a large extent upon the number of crops it handles. The heads of households averaged 175 days of work while the wives averaged 101. Part of this difference was due to an average of 48 days of farm work by the men. This ordinarily was in such skilled and semi-skilled work as pruning or handling farm equipment. A few added to their processing employment by going south in the fall and working in cotton gins.

Nonfarm workers had considerably more employment than the food processing workers, 29 more days of nonfarm employment and 16 more days of farm employment. Their 180 days of work, however, still falls short of being a full year.

The farm workers were at a distinct disadvantage as compared to nonfarm workers in moving into the other fields of employment. They averaged only five days of nonfarm employment to boost their small number of days of work for the year, the latter filled in their nonfarm employment with an average of 37 days of farm work. The nonfarm workers could compete successfully for farm jobs, usually the better ones, but the farm workers seem not to have had the same chance at nonfarm employment.

By Household Status

Household heads and nonschool youth tend to be in the labor market for the full year. They averaged 152 and 147 days of work, respectively. The average for heads of households is affected by the inclusion of the data for Mexican Nationals. Heads of households among the domestic workers averaged 164 days of work. Those in seasonal fruit work averaged 60 fewer days of employment than those in general farm work. The wives and school youth tend to be in the labor market only during the summer months. They averaged 83 and 49 days of work, respectively.

By Ethnic Group

Spanish-American workers had somewhat more employment than members of the Anglo-American ethnic group. This difference was largely because the Spanish-American heads of households averaged 46 more days of work than the Anglo-American heads. This is associated in part with the fact that they were preferred for jobs in general farm work, but they also reported more odd jobs during the off season. The green card Mexican workers also averaged more employment than the Anglo-Americans.

The Mexican Nationals averaged 119 days of work. This record, however, is incomplete. Over one-third of these workers were connected either with a farm or business in Mexico and spent part of the year on it. Days of work in these operations were not included, largely because the workers were unable to give a statement in regard to them. Many of the farms were of the subsistence type and there was no basis to estimate employment or earnings.

The employment of the Mexican Nationals during the period October 1961 to October 1962 can be summarized as follows:

	Number who worked	Average days of work	
		Workers who worked	All workers
Fall 1961, work in United States after October 1	68	48	17
All work in Mexico after October 1:			
Farm for self	69	NA	NA
Business for self	9	NA	NA
Hired farm work	48	123	46
Hired nonfarm work	21	149	
No work	55[1]	--	--
Summer and fall 1962, work in United States to October 1	198	56	58

More than 68 of these workers may have been employed in the United States during 1961, but the employment reports covered only work done here after October 1. The workers had an average of 44 days of work in Mexico and 72 in the United States. Some of the workers came to the United States as early as March 1962, but most of them had come in during the summer and fall months. The nonfarm jobs and businesses in Mexico included: construction work, truck driving, catching and selling fish, making and selling pottery, making and selling leather goods.

By Migrancy

Migrancy appears to be of lesser importance in the amount of employment than either type of work or family status. Workers who were residents of Stanislaus County averaged fewer days of work during the year than did those who migrated in seasonally. Yet the heads of households in these groups averaged similar amounts of employment. The differences were greatest among the wives and school youth. Local workers of these types probably were less inclined to remain in the labor market for the full season.

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[1] Workers in Mexico add to more than 198 because some workers reported more than one type of employment.

The Seasonal Pattern of Employment

The month of low employment of hired farm workers was March. During that month only 35 percent of the workers had any employment. As seasonal operations expanded, 61 percent had work in May, 66 percent in June, 70 percent in July, and 83 percent in August. Employment dropped in October to 63 percent and kept moving down to 41 percent in December, and 36 percent in February (Table 12 and Figure 8).

These are overall figures that cover the general farm workers, the seasonal workers, the heads of households, school youth, braceros, and all other groups. Employment of the general farm workers ranged from 66 percent employed in February to 84 percent in September. The fruit workers did less well, only 26 percent had any employment in March, 82 percent had work in August. The monthly employment of the vegetable workers was affected by the fact that most of them were braceros and had little employment in Mexico. Only 24 percent had any employment during February or March.

The low monthly percentages of employment among fruit workers was partially because almost half were women or youth. Roughly 15 percent of the wives had any employment during the first three months of the year. Seventy-two percent were employed during some part of August. Sons in school did little work except in June, July, August, and September. In August, 84 percent of these workers had employment. The nonschool youth had about as good employment as the head of the house during August, September, and October but dropped behind during the rest of the year.

Comparison of the employment of members of the various ethnic groups is affected by the fact that all the green card and bracero workers were adult males while the workers in the other groups included some women and children. Among the more comparable groups, the Spanish-American workers had more regular employment than the Anglo-Americans, and the green cards did much better than the braceros.

TABLE 12

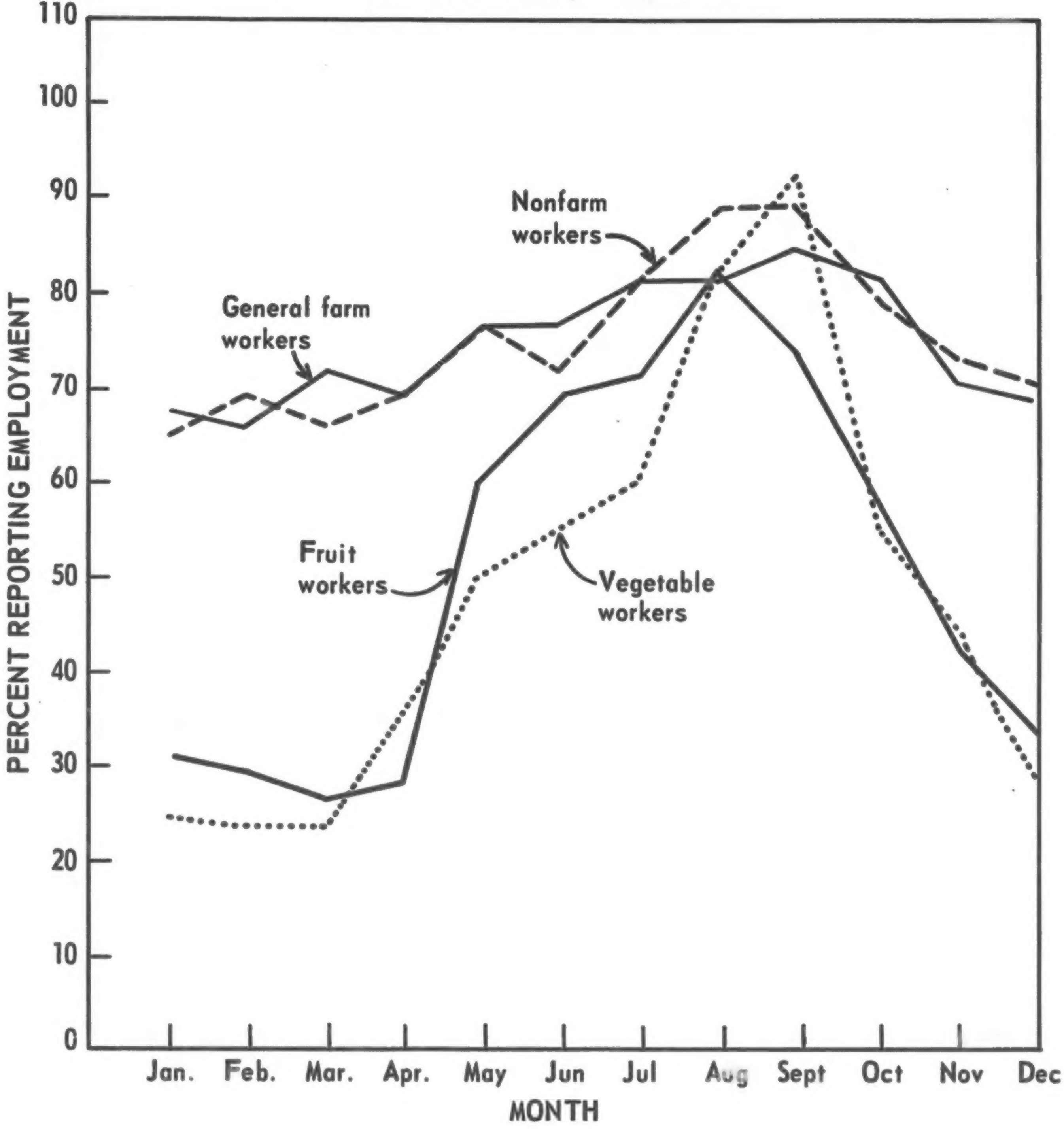
Percentage of the Workers Who Had Any Employment, Month by Month, During the Year Before the Interview, Stanislaus County, 1962-63

Group	Total workers reporting	Percentage who had any employment during the month											
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
	number	percent											
Major work													
General farm work	101	68	66	72	69	77	77	81	81	84	81	70	68
Fruit work	403	31	28	26	28	60	69	70	82	73	57	42	33
Vegetable work	245	25	24	24	36	50	55	60	82	92	54	44	28
Processing	53	42	30	30	38	60	58	74	89	83	83	62	45
Nonfarm	103	65	69	66	69	77	72	81	88	89	79	73	70
Household status[a/]													
Male heads	542	50	47	47	50	69	70	74	87	90	72	60	52
Wives	129	16	15	14	21	51	63	62	72	65	51	31	20
Nonschool sons	39	34	38	37	42	63	54	65	86	91	69	58	39
School sons	50	2	4	4	6	20	62	66	84	58	20	6	4
Ethnic group													
Anglo-American	437	38	34	29	31	61	67	71	83	73	59	47	39
Spanish-American	129	47	44	48	45	64	75	75	78	87	77	61	54
Green card Mexican	120	38	40	50	68	82	86	89	97	82	76	58	45
Mexican National	198	30	32	30	36	46	44	52	79	98	54	43	32
Migrancy[a/]													
Local nonmigrant	237	39	35	33	36	63	61	65	79	76	57	46	41
Local outmigrant	120	38	32	30	31	53	75	77	88	82	66	48	36
Domestic inmigrant	161	45	41	38	36	70	75	82	85	80	75	65	53
International inmigrant	305	32	33	37	47	59	59	65	85	92	61	47	35
All workers	904	38	36	35	40	61	66	70	83	82	63	50	41

[a/] Data for minor subgroups have been omitted from this table -- nonschool daughter, school daughter, other family members, other ethnic groups, and permanent inmigrants.

FIGURE 8

Percentage of Farm Workers Reporting Employment[a] – Stanislaus County – 1962-1963.



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[a] Percentage who reported any employment during the month. Data from 1962-1963 Survey.

The fact that most of the fruit farms in the county are small also had an important bearing on how much work the Anglo workers obtained. The days of work on a farm were few and the workers had to be diligent in their search for work. A summary of the detailed records kept by one farm worker illustrates this point:

Operation	Days of work	Number of employers
Pruning	22	5
Labor, odd jobs	46	10
Thinning	21	3
Berries	9	1
Apricots	19	2
Peach picking	34	13
Walnut picking	20	13
	171	47

His records show an average of 3.6 days per job. If he had not obtained odd jobs in town during the slack season, he would have had 125 days of work during the year.

The local outmigrants had less employment at the home base than the workers who remained in the area the year-round. This may be the reason for their having to migrate. The outmigrants, however, had more employment during the summer and fall months when they were away from home. The domestic inmigrants also had somewhat more regular employment than the local workers. Migrancy enables the workers to have more regular employment but the cost of travel may outweigh their added income.

It should be observed that almost any month of the year is the off-season for some type of worker. Very few lines of work provide year-round employment for the workers who engage in them. Workers regard this as a defect or a blessing depending on how steady they want to or need to work.

Length of the Work Day

The length of the work day is often incidental to the type of work. Berry growers try to harvest their berries in the morning when they are firm (Table 13). Some peach growers have their workers quit by two o'clock so the peaches will go to the cannery on the day they are picked. Many tomato growers had short days because the canneries had assigned them a quota -- the maximum tonnage they could deliver in a day. Hence, most jobs provided less than eight hours of work per day. Most workers expressed approval at being able to finish early in the afternoon. The exception was the Mexican Nationals. They feared they would have little left for the day's work after deductions had been made for their meals and other expenses.

TABLE 13

Length of the Work Day for Specific Operations, Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63

Operations	Total jobs	Hours of work per day					Average
		Under 6	6-7	8	9-10	Over 10	
	number	percent of jobs					hours
Short days							
Strawberries	47	30	36	15	19	--	6.7
Other berries	89	29	45	22	4	--	6.4
Tomatoes, pick	222	17	34	30	18	1	7.3
Highly variable							
Peaches, pick	542	5	43	43	8	1	7.4
Apricots	239	5	37	42	14	2	6.8
Almonds, walnuts	78	7	23	36	33	1	7.9
Cherries	135	2	32	46	12	8	8.0
Grapes	233	8	28	45	19	--	7.6
Melons	106	9	40	25	31	5	7.7
Eight-hour day							
Pruning	149	4	24	60	12	--	7.7
Peaches, thin	251	1	26	55	17	1	7.8
Sugar beets, thin	41	2	19	66	13	--	7.3
Tomatoes, hoe	55	9	18	64	9	--	7.6
Construction	63	3	10	71	8	8	8.3
Service work	32	9	9	63	19	--	7.9
Cannery	82	4	23	52	17	4	7.7
Long days							
General farm work	387	2	6	38	39	15	9.1
Truck driving	20	10	--	30	35	25	9.3
All jobs[a]	3,555	7	27	43	19	4	7.8

[a] Some operations have not been listed, particularly those which were performed outside the country.

EARNINGS OF THE FARM WORKERS

No attempt was made to obtain data on the total incomes of the farm workers. Some received money from welfare payments, Social Security, retirement funds, and similar sources; others received commodities during the winter months. The data obtained consisted of a job by job report on the wages received from any type of employment during the previous 12 months. A few workers had a record of their jobs and wages, but most of the reports were from memory. A check of the reports from memory with those from records indicated that probably some short jobs were not reported, and on the other hand, more days off occurred during the periods of employment than were reported. The result was some mistiming of the employment rather than any large difference in the total amount.

The 905 workers in the sample earned $1,159,196 during the year before the interviews; $874,502 of this was from farm work and $310,513 from employment in processing and other nonfarm jobs. An overall average figure on earnings per worker has little value because of the diverse nature of the group. This figure, however, was $1,283 -- $985 from farm work and $298 from nonfarm and processing employment (Table 14). When the braceros are excluded, the other workers had average earnings of $1,480. The relatively low averages for the vegetable workers, the Mexican Nationals, and the international migrants are due to their small earnings in Mexico. The braceros averaged 46 days of work in Mexico and $54 per worker. They worked an average of 72 days in the United States and earned $514.

The difference in types of farm work in the area resulted in a wide range of earnings as between the members of a family. The heads of households among domestic workers had average earnings of $1,992; the data reflect the earnings of those workers who were primarily in general farm or nonfarm employment. The wives had average earnings of $756 of which $315 came from cannery work or other nonfarm sources. Over one-third of the earnings of the out-of-school youth came from nonfarm employment, $530 out of $1,536.

Members of the different groups of domestic workers drew from the economy for their work at widely different rates. The seasonal fruit workers did rather poorly as compared to the general farm, processing, and nonfarm workers. Among heads of households, those in processing work earned 55 percent more than those picking the fruit. Wives in processing work earned 86 percent more than those in seasonal fruit work, and those in nonfarm work earned 122 percent more. It is differences of this type within a locality or even within a family that lead to the strong movement away from seasonal farm work.

TABLE 14

Average Earnings of the Farm Workers During the Previous Year, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Household Status, Major Work, Ethnic Group, and Migrancy

Group	Earnings for the year, by household status											
	Heads		Wives		Nonschool youth		School youth		Others		All workers	
	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm	Total	Non-farm
	dollars											
Major work												
General	2,336	104	1,530	--	2,241	--	245	--	53	14	2,159	90
Seasonal fruit	1,633	108	606	34	1,136	84	324	15	752	14	1,132	71
Seasonal vegetable	850[a]	40	595	104	703	--	676	90	739	--	803[a]	32
Processing	2,536	1,861	1,125	1,069	2,439	1,531	--	--	1,144	907	1,784	1,411
Nonfarm	2,131	1,621	1,346	1,129	1,576	1,232	786	489	278	143	1,859	1,432
Ethnic group												
Anglo-American	1,970	592	755	274	1,309	700	304	49	515	--	1,356	423
Spanish-American	2,264	428	784	450	1,745	823	597	47	1,062	202	1,593	385
Green card Mexican	1,992	185	1,059	--	1,525	164	--	--	906	33	1,782	169
Mexican National	536[a]	22	--	--	--	--	--	--	633	15	568[a]	20
Other	1,673	398	1,406	1,240	--	--	280	--	--	--	1,569	499
Migrancy												
Local nonmigrant	2,113	549	727	446	1,715	1,077	301	43	511	140	1,441	481
Local outmigrant	1,901	341	842	279	1,120	257	386	37	1,349	--	1,310	261
Seasonal inmigrant												
Intrastate	1,730	455	873	150	1,299	336	591	196	1,407	--	1,389	339
Interstate	2,203	689	995	176	1,093	--	495	--	968	--	1,591	416
International	1,020[a]	49	1,116	--	1,525	164	--	--	678	18	964[a]	51
Other inmigrant	2,155	865	574	255	1,921	426	221	--	88	--	1,517	590
All workers	1,681	352	756	315	1,536	530	394	48	684	33	1,283	298
All domestic workers	1,992	465	756	315	1,536	530	394	48	765	63	1,480	435

a/ Includes earnings in Mexico.

Except for the Mexican Nationals, the differences in earnings for members of the different nationality groups were not great and were determined by the proportion who were adult males and who were engaged in general farm, nonfarm, and processing employment.

The differences in earnings which can be related to migrancy, also were not high. The migrants within California, including those who migrated out of Stanislaus County, appear, however, to have been at some disadvantage. Their earnings averaged $1,310 as compared to $1,441 for the local nonmigrants, $1,591 for the intrastate migrants, and $1,517 for those workers who moved in permanently. Considering the costs associated with migration, it is doubtful that it paid most workers to move. Yet seasonal fruit workers may have no alternative in regard to migration.

Some comparative data in regard to earnings are available. Data from the disability insurance records compiled by the State Department of Employment indicate average earnings of $1,645 in 1962 of adult males who had only farm employment, and of $2,386 for those who had both farm work and nonfarm work.[1] Adult female workers in these groups averaged $458 and $1,017, respectively. This method of tabulation emphasizes the importance of nonfarm employment.

Median earnings of these workers run much lower and for adult males are $923 for those in farm work only, and $1,819 for those who did farm work and nonfarm work. Median earnings of nonfarm workers in Los Angeles in 1959 are available in the U.S. Census.[2] These include:

Occupation	Men	Occupation	Women
Bus drivers	$5,400	Bookkeepers	$3,700
Truck drivers	5,600	Cashiers	2,900
Taxi drivers	3,700	Secretaries	4,000
Machinery workers	5,100	Stenographers	3,800
Laundry workers	3,600	Telephone operators	3,400
Waiters	3,600	Typists	3,100
Janitors	3,500	Store clerks	1,900
Electricians	7,100	Laundry workers	2,200
Plumbers	6,800	Factory workers	2,800
Carpenters	5,700	Hairdressers	2,700
Auto mechanics	5,400	Practical nurses	2,200
Machinists	6,100	Waitresses	1,600
Longshoremen	6,800	Nurses	3,700
Construction labor	4,300	Teachers	5,200

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[1] Employment and Earnings of Adult Male Workers in California Agriculture, 1962, Calif. Dept. of Employment, Sacramento, 1965, Rept. 840, #5.

[2] U.S. Census of Population, U.S. Summary, Detailed Characteristics, 1960, Tables 124 and 208.

Earnings Per Day

The average earnings per day of $10.03 for members of this group is affected both by the high earnings of processing workers and the low earnings of the braceros in Mexico (Table 15). Heads of households averaged $11.06 per day, but those in processing employment averaged $14.49, while the braceros averaged $1.17 in Mexico and $7.14 in the United States.[1] Household heads who were seasonal fruit workers did almost as well as those who were in general farm work or nonfarm work, $11.42 compared to $11.51 and $11.64. Apparently irregularity of employment was the major problem for the fruit workers, rather than the rate of pay.

The green card migrants from Mexico seem to have made a good adjustment in the job market. Their average earnings were close to the same level as those of the Anglo-American and Spanish-American workers.

Earnings Per Day and Per Hour at Specific Types of Work

The amount the workers earned per day varied a great deal -- from one type of work to another -- from $5.32 for berry picking to $18.33 for driving a truck (Table 16 and Appendix Table 4). These variations arose from a series of factors -- the nature of the work, the type of worker who did it, the area in which it was done, and the length of the work day. Jobs in California, Oregon, and Washington paid better than those in New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma. Yet some of the poorest paying jobs were in Stanislaus County. These included berry and tomato picking. The factors involved in the lower rate of earnings included: a short work day, the use of women, youth, and imported workers, and the use of a large amount of hand work per unit of production. Productivity in these jobs has not been appreciably increased by mechanized methods.

The nonfarm jobs, except for a few in domestic or other service work, afforded much higher returns than those in agriculture. Within agriculture, general farm work, cherry, apple, olive, pear, and peach picking and peach thinning paid better than other types of work. These differentials in earnings are an important factor in the migration of workers from area to area and job to job. They come to Stanislaus County to pick peaches when they could go elsewhere to pick grapes, berries, melons, or oranges. They leave the jobs in berries in

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[1] Comparison of earnings as between braceros and other workers is not exact because of the meals, housing, etc. furnished to the braceros. For these they paid from $1.75 to $1.90 per day.

TABLE 15

Average Earnings Per Day, Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Household Status, Major Work, Ethnic Group, and Migrancy

Group	Average earnings per day, by household status					
			Youth			
	Heads	Wives	Non-school	School	Other	All workers
	dollars					
Major work						
General	11.51	10.60	10.05	--	5.30	11.36
Seasonal fruit	11.42	8.78	10.14	7.92	10.03	10.68
Seasonal vegetable	7.20[a]	7.17	6.57	8.14	6.37	6.98[a]
Processing	14.49	11.14	13.63	--	17.88	13.21
Nonfarm	11.64	8.97	7.23	10.48	2.96	10.33
Ethnic group						
Anglo-American	12.88	9.56	10.05	7.79	9.36	12.79
Spanish-American	11.38	8.52	10.01	8.41	10.51	10.62
Green card Mexican	11.31	8.08	10.59	--	8.02	11.00
Mexican National	4.62[a]	--	--	--	5.10	4.75[a]
Other	11.23	8.47	--	14.00	--	10.82
Migrancy						
Local nonmigrant	12.96	10.24	11.21	8.36	9.64	12.01
Local outmigrant	12.18	9.67	5.63	8.77	10.30	11.39
Seasonal inmigrant:						
Intrastate	10.95	9.00	9.84	9.69	10.74	10.52
Interstate	13.04	8.65	7.14	6.04	9.98	11.22
International	7.61[a]	9.30	6.30	--	5.51	7.74[a]
Permanent inmigrant	12.11	7.65	8.42	5.81	6.77	11.15
All workers	11.06	9.13	10.45	8.04	6.77	10.03
All domestic workers	12.14	9.13	10.45	8.04	11.59	11.48

[a] Includes earnings both in the United States and in Mexico. The Mexican Nationals averaged $7.14 per day in the United States and $1.17 in Mexico.

Stanislaus County to pick cherries in adjacent counties. They leave again in the fall and pick grapes, cotton, and olives rather than to pick tomatoes. They watch eagerly for chances to shift into nonfarm employment. The least desirable jobs are left for the newcomers and the contract workers.

Differences in earnings per day were due in part to differences in length of the work day. Earnings per hour at the major operations ranged from $0.83 to $2.15 (Table 16).

It was observed that some of these figures were lower than the amounts commonly regarded as average for workers in those lines. They check, however, with the figures which could be obtained from written records kept by the workers. An across-the-board sample includes the proper proportion of poorer workers, women, and youth, as well as the more capable.

Earnings of the Mexican Nationals

The Mexican National workers reported average earnings of $568.63 for the year, $514.37 in the United States and $54.26 in Mexico.[1] The range in earnings per worker was from $54 to $1,575. Those with small earnings were workers who were either unemployed or had a farm or business in Mexico, and had only been in the United States a short time before the interviews were made. Those with the highest earnings had worked in the United States both in 1961 and 1962. The workers are grouped as follows:

Earnings	Workers	Percent
Under $250	46	23.2
$250 - 499	50	25.3
$500 - 999	63	31.8
$1,000 and over	39	19.7
	198	100.0

Although rates of pay and earnings in Mexico were much lower than in the United States, prices also were much lower, so the differences have only a distant relationship to differences in levels of living. On the other hand, the eight to one rate of exchange meant that the $5.24 net earnings per day in the United States amounted to $41.92 in Mexican money.

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[1] Cash earnings: $1.90 per day was deducted in the United States for meals, etc. Their net earnings here averaged $377.50.

TABLE 16

Average Earnings Per Hour at Selected Operations, Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63 a/

Operation	Average hours worked per day	Average earnings per day	Average earnings per hour
	hours	dollars	
Picking peaches	7.4	11.29	1.53
Picking apricots	6.8	9.94	1.47
Picking nuts	7.9	9.51	1.20
Picking grapes	7.6	9.18	1.21
Picking tomatoes	7.3	6.96	.95
Picking melons	7.7	8.12	1.05
Picking strawberries	6.7	5.68	.85
Picking other berries	6.4	5.32	.83
Picking cherries	8.0	12.88	1.61
Picking cotton	7.7	6.39	.83
Thinning peaches	7.8	11.60	1.49
Thinning sugar beets	7.3	8.06	1.10
Hoeing tomatoes	7.6	7.85	1.03
Chopping cotton	8.5	7.68	.90
Pruning	7.7	9.98	1.30
General farm work	9.1	11.65	1.28
Cannery	7.7	16.56	2.15
Construction	8.3	16.44	1.98
Truck driving	9.3	18.33	1.97
Service work	7.9	9.02	1.14
All operations	7.8	10.03	1.29

a/ Some operations have not been listed, particularly those which were usually performed outside the area. Work in Mexico has been excluded.

Type of work	Jobs reported	Jobs with earnings per day of: Under $0.50	$0.50-.99	$1.00-1.49	$1.50-1.99	$2.00 & over	Average earnings per day
General farm	52	4	16	18	12	2	$1.08
Seasonal farm	18	4	6	4	4	--	1.04
Nonfarm	24	--	3	15	6	--	1.40
TOTAL	94[1]	8	23	37	22	2	$1.17

It must be remembered that this is only a partial record of the work in Mexico. Another 78 workers reported work on their own farms or business enterprises. A total of 55 workers did no work in Mexico, but averaged 106 days of work in the United States. The tendency of these workers to shift to employment in the United States is demonstrated by the work record of the green card workers, only three of 120 of these workers reported any work in Mexico. This was in nonfarm jobs which paid them an average of $2.84 per day.

Family Earnings

Data in regard to the employment and earnings of members of the family were not obtained from the Mexican Nationals nor from those green card workers whose families were still in Mexico. Hence they have been omitted from the data in regard to family earnings which applies to 346 instead of 644 family units. Some groups have been combined in the table so as not to involve too small numbers.

The 346 families had average earnings of $2,574 during the 12-month period before the interviews. Earnings of the seasonal farm worker families were $2,226 as compared to $3,078 for general farm worker families and $3,145 for processing and nonfarm families. Of the seasonal farm families, one-fourth had earnings of less than $1,000. Such earnings were usually those of one- or two-member families (Table 17).

Over half of the farm worker families had earnings within the $1,000 to $3,000 range. A few had earnings of over $5,000. This contrasts with the average income of families and individuals in the United States in 1962 which, after taxes, has been estimated at $6,000.[2] Twenty-one percent had incomes of less than $3,000.

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[1] Seventy-eight workers reported a total of 94 jobs, 120 braceros did not work for pay in Mexico during the 12-month period before the interviews. Those who did work averaged $138.

[2] Fitzwilliams, Jeanette M., "Size Distribution of Income in 1962," Survey of Current Business, April 1963.

TABLE 17

Earnings of Farm Labor Families During the Previous Year, Stanislaus County, 1963 a/

Type of family	Total families reporting	Percentage of families with earnings					Average earnings
		Under $1,000	$1,000-1,999	$2,000-2,999	$3,000-3,999	$4,000 & over	
	number	percent					dollars
Major employment of head							
General farm	60	3	15	32	26	24	3,078
Seasonal farm	216	25	29	25	12	9	2,226
Processing, nonfarm	70	13	11	33	26	17	3,145
Ethnic group							
Anglo-American	248	19	26	26	18	11	2,489
Spanish-American	68	13	15	34	18	20	3,023
Green card Mexican	13	15	23	23	16	23	2,781
Other	17	29	24	35	6	6	1,862
Migrancy							
Local nonmigrant	136	23	18	28	18	13	2,496
Local outmigrant	65	14	30	21	23	12	2,382
Seasonal inmigrant	99	17	24	32	15	12	2,603
Other inmigrant	46	14	27	28	12	19	3,008
Number in family							
1	62	32	34	31	2	1	1,631
2	84	29	23	30	12	6	2,356
3	46	15	22	26	20	17	2,708
4	42	7	25	32	32	4	2,528
5	37	13	30	14	24	19	2,755
6, 7	48	10	17	21	17	35	3,469
8 and over	27	--	7	42	33	18	3,406
All families	346	18	24	28	17	13	2,574

a/ Data are for domestic farm worker families only. Thirteen of 113 green card families are included because they had made their homes in Stanislaus County.

Both the Spanish-American and the green card Mexican families had somewhat higher earnings than the Anglo-American, $3,023 and $2,781 as compared to $2,489. This is associated with the greater amount of work obtained by them.

Family income is associated positively with size of the household, due largely to differences in the number of workers, $2,356 for a two-member family and $3,469 for a six- or seven-member family. This income increase, however, is not great enough to maintain the same level of living as the two-member families.

PLANS AND POTENTIALS OF THE FARM WORKERS

The era when migratory families could make a living in California agriculture practically ended with the mechanization of the cotton harvest.[1] The seasonal operations which are still available generally provide too little employment. Yet as farm or other families in the State and elsewhere come to an economic dead end, they are likely to migrate and try it. How long they will stay in seasonal farm work will depend on their abilities, their desires, and the rate of expansion of the nonfarm economy.

The movement of farm workers into nonfarm employment in California has varied according to the demand of inexperienced workers in urban occupations. A rapid movement out of farm work occurred during World War II and the Korean War but the rate of movement has been much slower during the periods of normal industrial and commercial activity. The 1962-63 period lies between the two. It was one of unusually rapid industrial growth, but without the publicity that occurs during a war. Yet the desire for nonfarm employment was evident among the workers in the Stanislaus County sample. Thirty-nine percent of the heads of households stated a preference for nonfarm work (Table 18). Probably this did not mean that they had definite plans as to the change they would make. More probably it meant that they would shift to nonfarm employment if and when an opportunity arose.

Those who often are regarded as habitual wanderers reported the lowest preference for seasonal farm work. Only 6 percent of the Spanish-American and 7 percent of the green card Mexican household heads stated a preference for it. They preferred general farm or nonfarm work and their survey records indicated that they are moving into jobs of these types. One-fourth of the Anglo-American workers and 36 percent of the Mexican Nationals expressed a preference for

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[1] Metzler, William H., The Farm Worker in a Changing Agriculture, Berkeley: University of California, Giannini Found. Res. Rept. No. 277, Sept. 1964.

TABLE 18

Type of Work Preferred by Heads of Farm Worker Households, Stanislaus County, 1962-63

Work preferred	All household heads		Ethnic group									
			Anglo-American		Spanish-American		Green card Mexican		Mexican National		Other	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
General farm	158	25	64	26	27	40	27	24	36	18	4	23
Seasonal farm	144	22	62	25	4	6	8	7	70	36	--	--
Nonfarm	249	39	99	40	30	44	40	35	72	36	8	48
Processing	44	7	16	6	7	10	16	14	4	2	1	6
Manufacturing	14	2	5	2	1	2	3	3	4	2	1	6
Truck driving	39	6	12	5	3	4	1	1	22	11	1	6
Construction	55	9	29	12	9	13	5	4	10	5	2	12
Service, sales	60	9	14	6	1	2	13	11	30	15	2	12
Other	37	6	23	9	9	13	2	2	2	1	1	6
No preference	93	14	23	9	7	10	38	34	20	10	5	29
All household heads	644	100	248	100	68	100	113	100	198[a]	100	17	100

[a] Although 60 of the Mexican Nationals did not have families of their own they have been classified as household heads.

seasonal farm work. Some members of both groups had a rural background and might be expected to shift this preference after they have had more contact with urban employment.

An examination of the reasons given by the household heads for their preferences indicates that many of the seasonal workers had too meager a basis to be able to arrive at a decision. The reasons given by those workers who stated a preference were as follows:

Preferred work	All household heads	Reason given for their preference: More pay or earnings	More work	Likes it	All he knows	Other or indefinite
General farm	158	44	28	32	30	24
Seasonal farm	144	21	--	20	74	29
Nonfarm	249	94	38	46	12	59
No preference	93	--	--	--	--	--
Total	644	159	65	98	116	112

Possibly three-fourths of the workers who "preferred seasonal farm" did so because they lacked experience along other lines.

It should not be inferred, however, that all the workers in nonfarm and general farm work were pleased with their line of work while the seasonal workers were not. A comparison of their major employment during the previous year with their preferences indicates the following:

Major employment	Total workers	Prefer work they are in	Total	Prefer another type: General farm	Seasonal farm	Nonfarm
General farm	74	43	31	--	6	25
Seasonal farm	321	108	213	85	--	128
Nonfarm	90	68	22	12	10	--

Most of the general farm workers who preferred another type of employment were those who were seasonally employed rather than those who had year-round jobs. They still face underemployment and economic insecurity. Some seasonal workers had no inclination to go into work where people "have to punch a time clock," and "lose their freedom." These are the people who like to stay in seasonal farm work. Usually they also do not want their farm employment to be too steady.

Plans for Children

The workers who had children of school age were questioned in regard to plans for their children. The answers centered on education because very few parents had specific vocational goals for their children. Twelve percent of the parents stated that they had no plans for their children or that they "would have to get along like we did" (Appendix Table 7). The latter type of statement was made somewhat more frequently by the worker who had advanced to general farm employment than by the seasonal or nonfarm worker. So it may indicate a belief that people get ahead by hard work rather than by formal education. Eighty-eight percent of the parents expressed a desire for their children to remain in school. The parents were not questioned as to the reason for this desire, but the essence of their statements was, "We want them to do better than we have." Education was regarded as the way out of their situation of underemployment and low incomes.

Age Factors

Part of the employment disadvantage of the Anglo-American workers arose from their age. Forty-four percent were over 44 years old as compared to 22 percent of the Spanish-Americans, 17 percent of the green card Mexicans, and 4 percent of the Mexican Nationals (Table 19). The Mexican workers, both green card and National, were concentrated in the age group 25 to 44 years, while the other ethnic groups had more older and younger members.

Education

The Anglo-Americans had a pronounced advantage in the amount of formal education. Forty-four percent had some education past the grade school as compared to 31 percent of the Spanish-Americans, 7 percent of the green card workers, and none of the Mexican Nationals (Table 19). The Anglo-Americans should have some advantage in moving out of hand labor jobs. Yet the education of the other workers was adequate to permit them to move into general farm work and many lines of nonfarm employment.

Work Experience

The heads of households were questioned in regard to their experience along two lines -- handling farm machinery and nonfarm employment. Some Anglo-American workers claimed to have had some experience in many types of farm and nonfarm work. In their case, the advantages from wide experience were overcome by frequent movement between jobs and lines of work. Their answers may cause some overestimation of the number of workers who have had experience in lines of work which will be an advantage to them.

TABLE 19

Age and Education of Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Ethnic Group

Group	All workers		Ethnic group									
			Anglo-American		Spanish-American		Green card Mexican		Mexican National		Other[a/]	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Age												
Under 25	237	26	107	24	51	40	20	17	58	29	1	5
25-44	411	45	138	32	49	38	79	66	132	67	13	62
45-54	144	16	95	22	20	15	17	14	8	4	4	19
55 and over	113	13	97	22	9	7	4	3	--	--	3	14
Total	905	100	437	100	129	100	120	100	198	100	21	100
Years in school												
0-2	188	21	9	2	17	14	46	39	116	59	--	--
3-4	148	17	34	8	17	14	42	36	52	26	3	14
5-6	113	13	44	10	23	19	20	17	22	11	4	19
7-8	198	22	156	36	27	22	1	1	8	4	6	29
9-10	119	13	94	22	20	16	3	3	--	--	2	9
11 and over	123	14	94	22	18	15	5	4	--	--	6	29
Total	889[b/]	100	431	100	122	100	117	100	198	100	21	100

[a/] Includes 14 Negroes, 3 Arabs, 2 Filipinos, 1 Puerto Rican, and 1 Guatamalan.

[b/] Years in school not obtained for 16 workers.

Almost half of the heads of households claimed to have had some experience in handling a tractor and other farm machinery. Twenty-five percent stated that their experience had only been with a light tractor and light tools, but another 21 percent stated that they had operated heavy tracklaying tractors (Table 20). The experience of the household heads varied widely from one ethnic group to another. Over two-thirds of the Anglo-Americans had such experience as compared to a little over half of the Spanish-Americans, 45 percent of the green card Mexicans, and one-sixth of the Mexican Nationals. The experience of the Anglo-Americans tended to include the use of heavy equipment while that of the Mexican workers did not.

Work Experience, Nonfarm

Almost half of the heads of farm worker households have had experience in some type of nonfarm work. The percentages for workers in the different ethnic groups ran as follows:

Group	Household heads	Heads with nonfarm experience: Number	Heads with nonfarm experience: Percent
Anglo-Americans	248	165	67
Spanish-Americans	68	36	53
Green card Mexicans	113	45	40
Mexican Nationals	198	50	25
Other	17	15	88
Total	644	311	48

As to the time when these workers had their nonfarm employment, 7 percent have had none since 1955 and appear not to be moving toward nonfarm work. On the other hand, 60 percent have done some nonfarm work during the last three years, and seem to be moving in the direction of nonfarm employment. Much of their nonfarm experience was in casual and unskilled work in which there was little prospect for permanent employment. These jobs are listed in Appendix Table 5.

LABOR MARKET ASPECTS

As the peach season comes to an end in Stanislaus County it is not unusual to see lines of Anglo-American farm workers at the Farm Labor Office looking for employment. The answer given them at that season of the year often is, "We only have tomato picking right now." Invariably the farm worker turns away. He regards tomato picking as a job for Mexicans, but not for him.

TABLE 20

Ability of Heads of Farm Worker Households to Handle Farm Equipment, Stanislaus County, 1962-63

Group	All household heads		Able to handle				No experience	
			Heavy equipment		Light equipment			
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Ethnic group								
Anglo-American	248	100	105	42	65	26	78	32
Spanish-American	68	100	20	29	18	27	30	44
Green card Mexican	113	100	11	10	40	35	62	55
Mexican National	198	100	2	1	32	16	164	83
Other	17	100	--	--	8	47	9	53
Major work								
General farm	82	100	36	44	26	32	20	24
Seasonal farm	388	100	72	19	98	25	218	56
Nonfarm	98	100	30	30	35	36	33	34
Farm for self	76	100	--	--	4	5	72	95
All household heads	644	100	138	21	163	25	343	54

These workers are merely following the established practice in the labor market. Some jobs are for Mexicans, some are for Anglos, others may be engaged in both. Although the Anglo workers need work badly when the peach season is over and jobs will be scarce until next summer, artificial work taboos keep them out of work in tomatoes and almost all other vegetable crops. These have been labeled as "stoop labor" which the Anglicized Mexican feels he must also avoid if he is to maintain his status.

"Stoop Labor"

What has been referred to as "stoop labor"[1/] is analogous to and may be a heritage of the system of the Spanish overlords who colonized Mexico and part of our own Southwest. The farm workers were organized into large gangs and utilized on large estates.[2/] Consequently, the "stoop labor" stigma has been associated largely with the Mexican laborers. The work they do regardless of type of work becomes labeled as "stoop labor" whether done in California, Nebraska, or Michigan. As these workers have moved from work in sugar beets and vegetables, they have carried the term "stoop labor" to the new types of work. In areas in which Mexicans have been used, work in oranges, lemons, grapes, berries, and cotton have gained the label of being only for Mexicans.

The most destructive aspect of the "stoop labor" stigma is that it drives or keeps Anglo- and Spanish-American workers out of the stigmatized work. Part of this may be due to the relationships between the workers in the fields, particularly if there is a Mexican crew boss, and part to the desire of crew leaders to avoid "mixed" crews. Dissimilar workers are made to realize that they are not wanted. The severest penalty for doing such work, however, is inflicted by a worker's compatriots. Any Anglo who engages in the tabooed work is downgraded by his Anglo neighbors and associates. The enforcement of social taboos can be cruel and effective.

[1/] Savala, Silvio, Spanish Colonization of America, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1943; also Simpson, Lesley Byrd, The Economienda in New Spain, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1929.

[2/] Thompson, Wallace, People of Mexico, New York: Harpers, 1921; Groening, Ernest, Mexico and Its Heritage, New York: The Century Co., 1928; Dusenberry, W.H., The Mexican Mesta, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963; and Cook, F.S., The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization, Berkeley: University of California, 1943.

The "stoop labor" label is related to the type of worker rather than the type of work, e.g., picking up potatoes in Kern County, California, a major producing area, is regarded as work for Anglo workers. Yet it is very hard work and requires more bending of the back than most stoop labor jobs. Picking and chopping cotton, picking grapes, oranges, lemons, and prunes are jobs for Anglos or for Mexicans, or for both, depending on the type of labor used in a particular area.

Worker Specialization

The "stoop labor" stigma has been given primary attention because the connotation separates the farm labor markets in Stanislaus and most other counties in California. It also results in a greater amount of underemployment for workers in these labor forces. There are other factors, however, which also reduce movement from one job to another and result in underemployment. The first of these lies in the narrow range of skills possessed by many of the workers. Some have had experience only in jobs which required little care, such as picking potatoes or cotton. Growers who need careful work done in picking fruit or vegetables for the fresh market avoid such workers. Some workers have become specialized in ladder work and state that any other work is "out of their line." Changes in attitudes are often necessary before there can be an increase in the number of skills.

The workers have a wide range of preferences as between different types of jobs. Most handworkers envy the man whose job involves riding a tractor or truck. The machine operator, however, tries to stay in his line of work and only engages in handwork when no machine jobs are available. At the other end of the preference scale are the "stoop labor" jobs, and those adapted to women or children, e.g., berry picking. These jobs usually have an uncertain supply of labor.

Jobs They Avoid

The heads of households were asked as to which kinds of work they avoided and why. The results did not bear out the opinions of experienced observers; first, in that over one-fourth of the workers said they would do anything, and second, the operations which they avoided included almost all the lines of work in the county (Table 21). The avoidances, however, centered around "stoop labor" jobs, and the rest were scattered.

TABLE 21

Operations Avoided by Heads of Farm Worker Households, and Reasons for Their Avoidance, Stanislaus County, 1962-63

Item	Heads of households reporting a/	Operation avoided					Avoid nothing
		Thinning sugar beets	Picking berries	Picking tomatoes	All stoop labor	Other operations b/	
	number						
Ethnic group							
Anglo-American	255	39	13	12	56	87	48
Spanish-American	29	6	1	--	1	9	12
Green card Mexican	46	13	7	--	2	3	21
Other	17	3	3	--	--	2	9
Reason for avoidance							
Low pay	87	8	18	6	16	39	--
Hard work	33	15	--	1	8	9	--
Hard work & low pay	15	6	--	--	3	6	--
Too much stooping	62	24	2	2	19	15	--
Out of their line	50	7	2	2	11	28	--
Too many Mexicans	10	1	2	1	2	4	--
Total	347	61	24	12	59	101	90

a/ Data obtained only during last two phases of the survey, hence do not include the Mexican Nationals and 99 other household heads.

b/ Scattered widely, but included cotton, grapes, peaches, apricots, prunes, melons, peas, pickles, lettuce, onions, garlic, all vegetable work, all tree work.

The reasons for avoidance centered around "low pay," "too much stooping," or "out of my line." "Low pay" was the reason most commonly given for avoiding the wide range of miscellaneous jobs. This may point to a defect in the employment and training structure. Employers tend to be interested more in hiring experienced workers than in providing training for the others. When workers with a limited range of skills try something else, their earnings are likely to be low. In the absence of any training program, they may have no other choice than to avoid new types of work. The employment system tends to push new workers aside rather than to fit them for the work in the area. The exception is the employment structure for Mexican workers. Mexican labor contractors and crew bosses may overdo their supervision but they do show their workers how the jobs should be done.

Discussion of worker "avoidances" often pointed to an employment structure that was unfriendly to them. Many workers had gone out to obtain jobs only to find that they were not wanted. Most of the tomato and other vegetable jobs are handled by Spanish-American labor contractors, crew bosses, or foremen. They have trouble with Anglos and can handle their own countrymen to better advantage. Mexican workers accept criticism, pushing, and driving as part of the job, and work hard to improve their performance. Anglo labor contractors who had formerly contracted for work in tomatoes reported, "We can't compete with that. Our workers won't stand for it."

It had been expected that almost all the Anglo workers would say that they avoided picking tomatoes. Only 12 stated that they did, 56 more probably included it in their avoidance of "stoop labor" -- a total of about 27 percent. On the other hand, 170 household heads, or 49 percent, stated that they had picked tomatoes at some time (Appendix Table 6). The reason why workers do not pick tomatoes appears not to lie so much in the choice of the workers as it does in the employment structure which has developed in tomato production.

Labor Contractors and the Labor Market

The farm employment structure in the county is not conducive to the best utilization of the labor force. Most fruit farmers do their own hiring at the gate, and farm workers circulate over the county to find jobs. Vegetable growers usually use a labor contractor and may shift contractors from one season to the next depending on which one makes them the best deal. The contractors may recruit workers locally or bring them in from other areas. Other growers shift between doing their own hiring and using a contractor, or they do their own hiring on one crop while they use a contractor for another. This lack of uniform hiring pattern is confusing to workers in need of employment, and particularly to those who do not know their way around the county.

There are approximately 75 labor contractors in Stanislaus County who have crews which range in size from eight to ten to 1,000 workers. Some lead crews every year, others shift in and out depending on whether they are able to obtain contracts. The larger contractors may handle jobs calling for 500 workers during one season and for only 100 the next.

The majority of the contractors are small Anglo-American operators who have small crews which they use in fruit jobs. Ordinarily they have no housing for their workers and act largely as recruitment agents. Although there is a smaller number of Spanish-American labor contractors, they handle nearly all the workers for the tomato and other vegetable harvests. Most of them supply housing and meals to their workers as well as the job contracts, training, and supervision. They handle most of the Mexican National workers and a small proportion of the green cards.

The Anglo labor contractors tend also to employ Anglo workers. Their field of operation, however, is narrowing as Spanish-American labor contractors are moving crews of Mexican workers into fruit jobs. As they do so, the field of employment for Anglo workers who make their own job contacts is becoming smaller.

Labor contractors abhor "mixed" crews, either a mixture of racial groups, or that of families with single workers. Such mixing often leads to trouble, and the labor contractor has little desire for the additional responsibilities involved. Consequently, the employment structure is highly stratified and this reduces the employment potential for all workers.

In Stanislaus County this situation is coupled with a shortage of housing, particularly for farm labor families. Both housing and jobs are scarce for Anglo families. During the 1962 and 1963 seasons, Anglo families were searching in vain for both. On the other hand, Spanish-American contractors were searching for more Spanish-American and green card workers to meet their labor needs.

In this type of labor market, the Farm Labor Office of the State Department of Employment serves as a residual agency. The growers and labor contractors who have not obtained sufficient labor, call in asking for workers on short notice. Workers who have not obtained jobs or who are not familiar with the county stop there and ask for work. This role is not an easy one, especially when (1) the need for workers is urgent, and (2) when there is either a marked shortage of workers or of jobs. In the first case, the Employment Service has had recourse to citizen recruitment and to the importation of Mexican Nationals. When there is a shortage of jobs locally, it may be able to direct workers to jobs in other areas, but unemployed workers may not be able to move accordingly.

The farm employment structure differs greatly from crop to crop and from area to area in California. In some cases, there is a seasonal flow of workers from one crop to another. In other cases, this flow is checked or completely stopped by artificial barriers. These barriers in Stanislaus County are status lines plus a labor-contractor-employer structure which permits movement only in one direction. It results in the labor contractors having a virtual monopoly on all stoop labor jobs and free access to the rest.

Experience of Workers With Labor Contractors

The practices of labor contractors have caused complaint for many years.[1/] The workers were asked as to their experience with contractors. Almost one-fourth of the Anglo- and Spanish-American workers had never used them (Table 22). These usually were general farm workers. All but a few of the Mexican Nationals in the county were working under labor contractors at the time of the survey, but had previously worked directly for a grower or group of growers.

Slightly over one-third of the workers had no complaint to make in regard to their treatment by labor contractors, and some recommended a particular contractor as always being fair and honest. Approximately 41 percent reported some type of bad experience. Frequently, this involved the contractors taking too large a cut for himself and paying too little to the worker, e.g., "He got 90 cents a tree for thinning those peaches, but he only paid us 65 cents." In an uncertain labor market, contractors are able to make gains at both ends -- from the growers and from the workers. Some workers, and particularly the Mexican Nationals and green card Mexicans, compared the treatment received from labor contractors with that received from growers. A majority of them favored the growers.

[1/] Bruce, Alan, Farm Labor Contractors in California, California Department of Industrial Relations, San Francisco, 1949.

TABLE 22

Experience With a Labor Contractor, Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, by Ethnic Group

Type of experience	All workers		Ethnic group									
			Anglo-American		Spanish-American		Mexican National		Green card Mexican		Other	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
No experience	89	14	56	23	17	25	--	--	14	12	2	12
Good experience	219	34	81	32	30	44	78	39	23	20	7	41
Bad experience	265	41	69	28	19	27	108	55	62	55	7	41
He cheats them	67	10	34	14	5	6	4	2	21	19	3	18
He overcharges	16	2	4	2	2	3	0	0	8	7	2	11
"Worse than rancher"	152	24	28	11	11	16	88	45	24	21	1	6
Unfavorable	30	5	3	1	1	1	16	8	9	8	1	6
Both good and bad	53	8	34	14	1	2	12	6	5	5	1	6
Other and no comment	18	3	8	3	1	2	0	0	9	8	0	0
Total	644	100	248	100	68	100	198	100	113	100	17	100

Displaced Workers

Before mechanization of the cotton harvest, workers who picked cotton in the southern part of the San Joaquin Valley moved north during the summer months to pick peaches in Stanislaus and Sutter counties and to engage in other fruit operations. On the other hand, some Stanislaus County residents moved south during the fall months to pick cotton. The cotton-fruit cycle had become a major aspect of the seasonal farm employment structure in the State.

Sixty-eight percent of the heads of domestic farm worker households in the Stanislaus survey reported that they had picked cotton. They were asked when they quit. The results were as follows:

	Number of workers	Percentage of		
		All workers	Cotton workers	Those who quit
All reporting	347	100		
No work in cotton	109	32		
Had worked in cotton	238	69	100	
Quit picking	182	52	76	100
Before 1950	63	18	26	35
1950 to present	119	34	74	65
Still picking	56	16	24	--

Apparently over one-fourth had quit "going to the cotton" before the reduction in cotton jobs because of mechanization. The majority, however, have dropped out since and the length of their work year has been reduced by lack of this type of employment. Surprisingly, 24 percent of the household heads who had picked cotton said that they still did so. Part of this work was in nearby counties -- Merced, Madera, and Fresno -- while the rest was in Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma, or Mexico (Appendix Table 3). There is a scarcity of employment for Anglo- and Spanish-American workers in Stanislaus County after the peach harvest is over, so they still try to follow their habitual work patterns. This source of employment, however, is disappearing rapidly.

In Stanislaus County, tomato picking follows closely after peach picking and much of the same labor force could be used. Now that the alternative of cotton picking is almost gone, from 27 to 58 percent of the fruit workers are unemployed during the tomato harvest (Table 12). Probably they have little chance to pick tomatoes as long as the present employment structure for tomato work continues. Yet there is no way to be sure how many would move into the tomato harvest if employment conditions were right. Community attitudes need to be developed which will assure them that they can do this work without losing status in their neighborhood and in the community as a whole.

Changes in the Seasonal Demand Pattern

The need for seasonal labor in the county continues strong despite mechanization and other labor-saving technology. The annual pattern of labor needs will also shift slightly. The ratio of young nonbearing acreages to bearing acreages in the county in 1963 was as follows:

Crop	Percentage of trees & vines which are still nonbearing [1]	Number of harvest workers at peak of season [2]	Period of peak need[2]
Almonds	60	470	Sept. 15-Oct. 15
Apricots	50	3,600	June 10-July 21
Grapes	6	2,600	Sept. 15-Nov. 1
Peaches, cling	24	8,600	Aug. 1-Sept. 10
Walnuts	38	1,240	Oct. 10-Nov. 10

The significant increases from a labor standpoint are those in apricots and peaches. Labor needs at the peak of the peach harvest are likely to increase by almost 20 percent, depending on the rate at which old orchards will be pulled out, and crop control methods are used. This will entail a need for from 1,500 to 2,000 more workers who will have only six to eight weeks of employment (Table 3). The almost 50 percent increase in the demand for labor in apricots will provide more work for tree workers in pruning, thinning, and harvesting, just ahead of the peach season. This gain is important even though it is matched by the increased demand for workers at the peak of the year. It will permit more workers to remain in the farm labor force in the county. Improved harvesting methods are likely to result in an actual reduction of labor needs for harvesting almonds and walnuts. This will cut labor needs during the fall months.

Present reports indicate that mechanization of the tomato harvest will mean that approximately 3,000 fewer workers will be needed in October and early November. The work, too, will no longer be stoop labor, but will consist largely of sorting tomatoes on the harvester. This work should be acceptable to the tree workers and should lengthen the work year for around 750 to 1,000 of them. Mechanization of this operation will both solve a difficult recruitment problem, and lengthen the work year for members of the local labor force.

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[1] Data from 1963 Agricultural Crop Report, Stanislaus County, Department of Agriculture, Modesto.

[2] Estimates from Weekly Farm Labor Reports, 1963, State Department of Employment, Sacramento.

The supply of seasonal labor available for the fruit harvests is being reduced by curtailment of the demand for seasonal workers. Mechanization of cotton picking and chopping, of the potato harvest, and later of the prune and grape harvests can be expected to reduce the number of migratory workers who can make a living by moving from one harvest to another. To the trends reducing the labor supply should be added the programs to educate and train low-income people. As these programs multiply, the workers are likely to bypass seasonal farm employment entirely.

New Competition for Labor

Stanislaus County farmers are becoming increasingly aware of competition for their labor supply from the rapidly expanding industrial and commercial areas in adjacent counties. Estimates of nonagricultural employment in those areas are as follows:[1]

Area	Employees in non-agricultural establishments	
	1949	1962
Stockton	19,200	64,300
Sacramento	89,500	176,200
San Francisco-Oakland	785,400	1,033,700
San Jose	75,200	229,500

This is an increase of 534,400 workers during a period of 13 years. Most economic observers forecast that the industrial and commercial expansion of these areas will continue. The opportunity for the farm workers to enter nonfarm employment apparently is as great as their qualifications to take advantage of it. The off-season is now so long that they are practically forced to seek a more dependable source of income. Even the general farm workers have a period of seasonal unemployment which provides an opportunity for them to acquaint themselves with urban jobs.

The rate of depletion of the farm labor supply in the future is likely to depend on the rate of expansion of nonfarm employment opportunities in the adjacent areas, and on the activities of farmers in the area to attract and hold a labor supply. At present, Stanislaus County growers have comparatively little to offer -- about 100 to 125 days of work in a season, after which the workers must look elsewhere for their sustenance. The major advantage of farm work in this county consists in temporary employment adjacent to a job area which affords continuous nonfarm employment at high wages.

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[1] Estimated Number of Wage and Salary Workers in Nonagricultural Establishments, 1949-62, California Department of Industrial Relations, San Francisco. Separate reports for each area.

The position of the California growers in the labor market has been summarized by Kenneth R. Farrell of the University of California: "With alternative employment opportunities, with pay scales exceeding those in agriculture, competition for labor has already become severe. ...the off-farm demand for labor will mean that California farm operators currently requiring large numbers of hired labor will have increasing difficulty in meeting their needs. Several alternative courses of action are open to them. First, they can employ each new labor-saving device available. ...Second, they can organize in such a fashion as to employ a nearly constant labor force over the entire year."1/

Development of a Recruitment Program

Stanislaus County growers have recognized their difficult position in obtaining a labor supply for the peach and other harvests and have set up the Growers Harvesting Committee to recruit workers.2/ This group, made up of several hundred growers and canners, issues circulars for distribution at the Farm Labor Offices over the State. These circulars list the operations which will need outside labor and the dates of these needs. When needed, advertisements for harvest labor are also run in city newspapers. The policy of the organization is to recruit seasonal labor but to avoid bringing in workers who will try to remain through the winter when little work is available.

This organization is endeavoring to meet the labor supply problem through cooperation with the State Department of Employment and other agencies. Although its efforts have generally been successful, imported workers have been called in for some harvest emergencies.

1/ Testimony before Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, November 16-17, 1959.

2/ Hearings, Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare, Sacramento, November 16-17, 1959 and December 15-16, 1960, pp. 166-81.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Specialization in the crops best adapted to the local area is growing both in the United States and in the rest of the world. This system of agriculture is highly productive but creates difficult problems when large numbers of workers are required for short periods of time. Then seasonal unemployment, migration, and relief become part of the system. Underemployed groups develop which exist at levels separate from those of the rest of the community.

A survey of the fruit and vegetable workers in Stanislaus County in 1962-63 indicated that they were underemployed despite the fact that three-fourths of them had worked in other areas during the year. The domestic farm workers averaged 129 days of work during the year, and those who were imported from Mexico, 119 days. The domestic workers earned an average of $1,480. Heads of households who engaged chiefly in seasonal fruit work had an average of 143 days of work and $1,633 in pay. Family earnings for the domestic seasonal workers averaged $2,226. In general, the earnings of these workers were about one-third of those of wage earners in nonfarm employment.

A majority of these workers had no firm attachment to seasonal farm work. They desired to move into more regular farm or nonfarm employment. Sixty percent had first come to the county during the last three years. Part of these had been imported, others had been displaced by mechanization of the cotton harvest. Displaced workers use it as a makeshift until they can find more dependable employment.

The seasonal employment available in the county was divided between two almost separate labor forces. Anglo- and Spanish-American workers performed the fruit operations, but imported workers were used to pick the tomatoes and melons. This situation developed partly because the domestic workers preferred to work in the fruit crops, but also because of the stigma on "stoop labor."

Whether the workers or the growers are at a greater disadvantage in a highly seasonal area depends on the supply of labor that is available. When labor is in surplus as it has been, due to the immigrations, depressions, droughts, and displacements in the past, the workers compete for whatever portion of the seasonal work they can get. The greater the surplus of workers, the greater the underemployment. The seasonal employers have been at a disadvantage, however, during the short periods of international conflict. They could neither compete for nor hold labor. The government imported labor for them and thereby shored up the seasonal employment structure.

At present, a rapid expansion of the industrial areas adjacent to Stanislaus County is pulling workers away from the county. The anti-poverty and manpower training programs are also drawing on the labor supply. Dependence on the government for a labor supply is uncertain. Consequently, the growers now have a responsibility which they have not had to meet before -- how to develop their own labor force, which will meet their seasonal needs in a dependable way.

Considerations in Developing a Stable Labor Force

Some generalizations can be drawn from the present study and other sources in regard to the development of a stable labor force in a seasonal area such as Stanislaus County. Figure 1 in this report provides a purview of the present labor demand situation in the county. Approximately one-fourth of the workers can obtain sufficient employment to be able to live and work in the county; about the same proportion can have work from May until November; half of them are used for only a few weeks or months during the fall.

Two major developments in this annual pattern of labor demand would seem to be desirable. First, action toward year-round employment for the May to November workers, and second, development of a local seasonal labor force to take care of the peak season needs.

Increasing Year-round Employment

In developing more employment between November and May, first consideration might be given to new crops and to new varieties of the present crops. For example, more spring vegetable crops, and earlier and later varieties of apricots, peaches, grapes. Close work with state experiment stations could speed up development along these lines. Experimentation by growers would be encouraged if government agencies set up low interest rate loans on, or otherwise financially assisted, enterprises designed to spread out the work year.

In the second place, the nonfarm job structure in the community could be examined to ascertain how much work could be shifted to the November to May period. Private employers and the city and county governments could shift as much work as possible to the slack months. Enterprises which had high seasonal employment during the winter months could be encouraged. Giving local workers preference in obtaining this employment, would build up the local labor supply.

A central clearing agency would be useful in selecting and developing the pool of local labor and in providing continuous employment. This could be managed by a grower organization, the Employment Service, or other agency.

Low-cost housing programs for year-round housing can be used to help develop a local labor force of year-round and seasonal workers. Excess seasonal housing constitutes an invitation to floating workers, and endangers the development of a local labor force.

Without income security through unemployment insurance, farm workers tend to avoid farm work. A system of unemployment insurance might be devised which would encourage (1) growers to retain workers on the payroll for longer periods, and (2) workers to remain on a job until the end of the season.

Growers can apply mechanization and other technology diligently to cut peak season labor needs, but apply them more cautiously in relation to slack season activities.

Seasonal Workers for Seasonal Jobs

Before the heavy influx of migrants during the thirties, most of the harvest work in the deciduous fruit areas was performed by local labor, farm family labor supplemented by that of neighbors, youth, and others who used it as a change from their regular routines. As the migrants now diminish in numbers, these local workers will be needed again. A flexible local labor force made up of local workers who do not want or require full annual employment could be the normal labor supply to meet the peak season needs. This is especially appropriate for Stanislaus County since the peak labor need occurs during the summer vacation period. Preferred hiring of these workers can gradually substitute a local labor force for migrants whose movements are undependable.

When it is impossible to meet peak labor needs locally, the first recourse could be to supervised youth groups from nearby areas. A major consideration would be whether these groups would be available seasonally year after year. Job Corps workers and members of distant youth groups might be made available in years of unusually heavy labor demands.

The development of a local seasonal labor force would require community effort. This provides an opportunity to build attitudes of community endeavor and cooperation. This opportunity was lost when the harvest was performed by outsiders. Community attitudes can be developed which call for youths, housewives, and other people who have spare time to lend a hand in harvest emergencies. The educational aspects of the work of youth groups can be stressed.

Policies in Regard to Migrants

There are three major types of migrant labor which enter the county, and these can be dealt with as they fit into a program of labor stabilization. First are the migrants from Tulare County and other areas in which the seasonal work dovetails with the May to November demand in Stanislaus County. They come in year after year and fit into the stabilization pattern. When migration affects the education of children, the families need to be grounded.

The second group of migrants is comprised of those who move widely from one harvest area to another. To employ them is to encourage the continuation of floating groups who may or may not return, and to defeat local labor stabilization. They need help to settle down, but not to keep moving.

The third group of migrants is the families from Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and other cotton areas who are searching for a new economic foothold. A selective approach toward them can aid in the stabilization process. When heads of households can be given permanent employment, the members of their families may become available for the seasonal labor supply. On the other hand, to employ all such migrants on the same basis as local workers, is to endanger the development of a stable local labor supply.

Improving the Status of Farm Work

The stigma on "stoop labor" has degraded much of the work in vegetables. Fortunately mechanization of the tomato harvest will eliminate the major stoop labor operation in the county. Many hoeing, weeding, and picking operations, however, still need to be upgraded so that any worker can do them without loss of social status.

The employment of school youth and other Anglo workers in large groups can be used to eliminate this stigma. Then several underemployed labor forces will not be needed to perform several different levels of farm work.

APPENDIX TABLES

APPENDIX TABLE 1

Household Characteristics of the Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Ethnic Group

Item	All households		Ethnic group									
			Anglo-American		Spanish-American		Green card Mexican		Mexican National		Other	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Family size												
1	138	22	42	17	9	13	14	12	64	33	9	53
2-3	174	28	105	42	19	28	18	16	30	15	2	12
4-5	137	27	58	23	15	22	23	20	38	19	3	17
6-7	109	17	34	14	9	13	25	22	40	20	1	6
8-9	58	9	6	3	11	16	21	19	18	9	2	12
10 & over	28	4	3	1	5	8	12	11	8	4	--	--
Total	644	100	248	100	68	100	113	100	198	100	17	100
Number of workers												
1	169	51	117	47	38	56	a/	--	a/	--	14	82
2	109	33	93	38	14	21	--	--	--	--	2	12
3	33	10	23	9	9	13	--	--	--	--	1	6
4	11	3	9	4	2	3	--	--	--	--	--	--
5-6	11	3	6	2	5	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	333	100	248	100	68	100	--	--	--	--	17	100
Major occupation of head												
General farm work	82	13	39	16	17	25	20	18	4	2	2	12
Seasonal farm work	388	60	157	63	41	60	82	72	96	49	12	70
Processing	18	3	12	5	3	5	3	3	--	--	--	--
Nonfarm	80	12	40	16	7	10	8	7	22	11	3	18
Farm for self	76	12	--	--	--	--	--	--	76	38	--	--
Total	644	100	248	100	68	100	113	100	198	100	17	100

a/ Data on number of workers in the household were not obtained from Mexican National and most green card workers.

APPENDIX TABLE 2

Household Status of the Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Ethnic Group, Major Work, and Migrancy

Group	All workers		Household status									
			Head		Wife[a/]		Youth [b/]				Other	
							Nonschool		School			
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Ethnic group												
Anglo-American	437	100	230	53	122	28	18	4	52	12	15	3
Spanish-American	129	100	64	50	21	16	12	9	23	18	9	7
Green card Mexican	120	100	93	77	2	2	18	15	--	--	7	6
Mexican National	198	100	138	70	--	--	--	--	--	--	60	30
Other	21	100	17	81	3	14	--	--	1	5	--	--
Major work												
General farm	101	100	87	86	4	4	3	3	5	5	2	2
Seasonal fruit	403	100	208	52	98	24	21	5	56	14	20	5
Seasonal vegetable	245	100	155	63	7	3	5	2	12	5	66	27
Processing	53	100	21	40	26	49	4	7	--	--	2	4
Nonfarm	103	100	71	69	13	13	15	14	3	3	1	1
Migrancy												
Local nonmigrant	240	100	125	52	59	25	18	8	25	10	13	5
Local outmigrant	120	100	61	51	33	27	2	2	22	18	2	2
Seasonal inmigrant												
Intrastate	78	100	46	59	16	20	4	5	9	12	3	4
Interstate	83	100	46	55	16	19	5	6	13	16	3	4
International	306	100	222	73	1	--	16	5	--	--	67	22
Permanent inmigrant	78	100	42	54	23	29	3	4	7	9	3	4
All workers	905	100	542	60	148	16	48	5	76	9	91	10

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a/ Includes 19 female heads of households.

b/ Nonschool youth had not been out of the labor market during the year because of school attendance. Of these, 39 were young men and nine were young women. Among the school youth there were 50 boys and 26 girls.

APPENDIX TABLE 3

Location of Jobs Held During Previous 12 Months, by Farm Workers Interviewed in Stanislaus County, October 1962-September 1963

Operation	Jobs re-ported	San Joaquin Valley				Cen-tral coast coun-ties	South-ern Calif. coun-ties	Other Calif. coun-ties	Texas, Ariz., & other south-west states	Wash., Ore., & other states	Mexico
		Stani-slaus	Merced, Madera, Fresno	Tulare, Kern, Kings	San Joa-quin						
General farm work	386	211	15	14	10	4	24	12	34	10	52
Pruning	149	117	14	6	5	2	4	--	--	1	--
Peaches, thin	251	224	16	2	4	1	--	4	--	--	--
Peaches, pick	542	488	25	5	13	--	--	9	2	--	--
Apricots	239	165	3	--	9	30	--	32	--	--	--
Almonds, walnuts	78	62	1	3	8	2	--	2	--	--	--
Cherries	135	4	--	--	62	7	--	4	3	55	--
Apples, pears	82	3	--	--	--	28	--	12	2	37	--
Grapes	233	179	14	11	6	2	19	2	--	--	--
Citrus, olives	97	--	--	75	--	--	7	13	1	1	--
Strawberries	47	31	--	--	--	5	--	2	--	9	--
Other berries	89	83	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	4	--
Melons	106	48	18	15	1	1	18	2	3	--	--
Asparagus	46	2	--	--	35	--	1	6	--	2	--
Other vegetables	126	42	1	3	15	18	24	9	7	5	2
Cotton, chop	31	--	9	7	--	--	4	--	11	--	--
Cotton, pick	75	--	21	5	--	--	3	--	34	--	12
Tomatoes, hoe	55	33	3	--	15	--	3	1	--	--	--
Tomatoes, pick	222	160	11	--	22	--	10	17	2	--	--
Sugar beets	41	12	1	6	7	4	2	4	--	5	--
Other farm work	139	58	9	11	4	2	3	36	4	8	4
Cannery	82	74	--	--	5	--	--	3	--	--	--
Other processing	63	35	4	9	1	2	5	--	4	3	--
Construction	63	23	4	1	2	1	2	3	9	2	16
Truck driving	20	6	--	1	1	1	3	2	3	1	2
Service work	32	15	--	--	--	1	1	6	8	1	--
Other nonfarm	125	52	3	5	4	2	2	18	20	9	10
Total	3,554	2,127	172	179	229	115	135	199	147	153	98

APPENDIX TABLE 4

Earnings Per Day at Specific Operations, Farm Workers
Stanislaus County, 1962-63 a/

Operation	Total jobs reported	Percentage of jobs with daily earnings of					Average earnings per day
		Less than $6.00	$6.00-8.00	$9.00-11.99	$12.00-14.99	$15.00 & over	
	number	percent					dollars
General farm work	334	2	24	30	26	18	11.65
Pruning, tree	105	3	29	33	27	8	10.45
Pruning, vine	44	7	48	39	4	2	8.85
Peach thinning	251	4	18	36	19	23	11.60
Peach picking	542	9	24	21	21	25	11.29
Apricot thinning	25	--	28	52	12	8	10.04
Apricot picking	214	15	27	24	16	18	9.94
Cherry picking	135	8	19	26	10	37	12.88
Grape picking	233	17	31	26	16	10	9.18
Apple picking	51	4	14	22	25	35	13.43
Citrus picking	52	14	48	21	17	--	8.42
Olive picking	45	11	20	11	27	31	11.58
Pear picking	31	3	23	39	6	29	11.55
Almond, walnut picking	78	13	22	37	24	4	9.51
Cotton chopping	31	3	71	26	--	--	7.68
Cotton picking	65	43	43	9	3	2	6.39
Tomato hoeing	55	13	73	11	3	--	7.85
Tomato picking	222	32	50	14	3	1	6.96
Melon harvest	106	8	62	22	6	2	8.12
Lettuce harvest	30	--	67	23	7	3	8.67
Asparagus harvest	46	22	52	13	11	2	7.90
Other vegetables	89	28	43	23	6	--	7.42
Strawberry picking	47	51	36	13	--	--	5.68
Other berry picking	89	63	32	4	1	--	5.32
Sugar beet thinning	41	20	51	22	--	7	8.06
Other farm work	140	11	25	30	17	17	10.34
Cannery work	82	--	2	6	22	70	16.56
Packingshed work	44	4	9	27	37	23	12.54
Other processing	19	--	21	11	21	47	15.81
Construction	47	--	9	17	19	55	16.44
Truck driving	18	--	--	6	33	61	18.33
Service work	32	19	25	41	13	2	9.02
Other nonfarm work	108	7	20	32	25	16	11.23
All operations	3,451	13	30	24	16	17	10.03

a/ Data are for the 12-month period before the day the interview was made. They are for all workers, men, women, and youth, and for all jobs held in the United States. Earnings at jobs in Mexico are excluded.

APPENDIX TABLE 5

Nonfarm Experience of Heads of Farm Worker Households, by Ethnic Group, Stanislaus County, 1962-63

Item	All workers		Ethnic group									
			Anglo-American		Spanish-American		Mexican National		Green card Mexican		Other workers	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Processing	68	10	44	18	12	18	--	--	9	8	3	18
Construction	97	15	55	22	9	13	20	10	9	8	4	23
Lumber, oil, mining	10	2	9	4	1	1	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mechanic, service, etc.	10	2	4	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	6
Manufacturing	21	3	10	4	--	--	6	3	5	5	--	--
Truck driving	22	3	15	6	3	4	2	1	1	1	1	6
Cafe, hotel, laundry	25	4	11	4	2	3	4	2	6	5	2	12
Store, office	58	9	17	7	8	12	16	8	13	11	4	23
None	333	52	83	33	32	47	148	75	68	60	2	12
Total	644	100	248	100	68	100	198	100	113	100	17	100

APPENDIX TABLE 6

Percentage of Heads of Households Who Had Worked in Selected Operations, by Ethnic Group, Stanislaus County, 1962-63

	Percentage of household heads[a]				
Operation	Household heads reporting	Anglo-American	Spanish-American	Green card Mexican	Other
	percent				
Picking cotton	67	69	72	46	70
Picking berries[b]	59	60	57	53	60
Picking grapes	73	70	75	76	93
Picking tomatoes	49	37	63	81	63
Thinning sugar beets	41	21	60	88	69
Number reporting	347	233	40	59	15

[a] Data obtained only from heads of household during the last two phases of the survey. Hence, do not include the Mexican Nationals and other workers interviewed during the tomato and grape harvests in 1962.

[b] Includes berries of all types.

APPENDIX TABLE 7

Plans for Education of Children by Household Heads who had Children of School Age, Farm Workers, Stanislaus County, 1962-63, by Ethnic Group, Major Work, and Migrancy

Group	Household heads with school age children		Plans for children			
			Keep in school		No plans	
	no.	pct.	no.	pct.	no.	pct.
Ethnic group						
Anglo-American	111	100	99	89	12	11
Spanish-American	39	100	33	85	6	15
Green card Mexican	10	100	9	90	1	10
Other	2	100	1	50	1	50
Major work						
General farm	37	100	28	76	9	24
Seasonal farm	82	100	75	91	7	9
Nonfarm	43	100	39	91	4	9
Migrancy						
Local nonmigrant	74	100	62	84	12	16
Local outmigrant	24	100	22	92	2	8
Seasonal inmigrant	38	100	35	92	3	8
Other inmigrant	26	100	23	88	3	12
All household heads	162	100	142	88	20	12